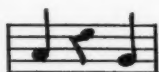


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1955-1956

The American RECORD GUIDE



July, 1955
Volume 21, No. 11

HOW TO BUILD A
LOUDSPEAKER
ENCLOSURE — PART 2



THIRTY-FIVE CENTS

HI-FI LABORATORY RECORDINGS

LISZT: *Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 1, 2, & 5*; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Westminster Laboratory Series W-LAB 7003, \$7.50.

REVUELTAS: *Sensemaya; Cuauhnahuac*; **CHABRIER:** *Spanish Rhapsody*; **MOSSOLOV:** *Iron Foundry*; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Argeo Quadri. Westminster Laboratory Series W-LAB 7004, \$7.50.

▲THE IDEA behind Westminster's Laboratory series is simply not to crowd too much music on one side of a record in order to achieve the cleanest and clearest sound, free of "pre-echo," and with the best balance possible of the instrumentation. Engineers seem to be in agreement that this series of recordings have marked characteristics that are assets, let us say, to the engineering ear. They are designed for hi-fi enthusiasts who want the utmost clarity in sound. The musical enthusiast may not be swayed toward the so-called ultimate in high fidelity but he is admittedly more pleased with a first-rate performance well reproduced than a second-rate one that has superior reproduction. Engineer McProud, editor of "Audio" Magazine and author of the notes presented with the Laboratory Series, in his booklet admits his preference as an engineer for superior reproduction. "I would," he says, "invariably select the recording that was technically perfect but musically poor over one which was poorly recorded." Well, the performances on these two records are not poor ones,

if not the most illuminating ones. Scherchen's attention to detail in the Liszt *Rhapsodies* is all to the good in fulfilling an engineer's desires in instrumental detail. I find a certain satisfaction in Scherchen's highly personalized musicianship, which curiously distracted me on first hearing and detracted from rightful absorption with the recording. Combining the two elements, on second hearing, left me enthusiastic about the latter rather than the former.

Quadri's collection of works are of more interest to me, especially those by the Mexican composer Revueltas, who was an imaginative musician with modern as well as primitive characteristics that prevailingly fascinate. As for Mossolov's *Iron Foundry*, which Mr. McProud admits listening to 60 times in one week, this is an example of the "twaddling twenties" when composers were seeking to make music out of all sorts of extraneous sounds not regarded as related to music. One is reminded of the inexorable force of the machine, its brutality—characteristics rightfully alien to music but here made almost as realistic as life. A shocker in its day, this work is no longer recognized as such. But what a score for a laboratory recording and the hi-fi enthusiasts' delight! Chabrier's familiar *Rhapsody*, which opens the program, is performed in a manner that suggests that Quadri had an eye toward the engineering booth. But what it lacks in incisiveness and élan is made up for in sound. Taken all in all, this is the one record of Westminster's Laboratory Series to date that I would urge all listeners to hear. The Revueltas pieces are worth the price of the disc, in my estimation.

—P.H.R.

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formerly
The American Music Lover

Volume 21, No. 11

July, 1955

Cover Picture: Geza Anda (see page 360)

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July, 1955

ALL-AMERICAN

HIVELY: *Tres Himnos*; **PORTER:** *Poem and Dance*; **DONOVAN:** *New England Chronicle*; the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. Mercury LP MG-40013, \$4.98.

WEIGEL: *Prairie Symphony*; **BINKERD:** *Sun Singer*; the University of Illinois Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernard Goodman. U. of Ill. Custom Series LP CRS-2, available only through the University, \$2.50.

▲THE joy of discovery comes often to a professional listener, but rarely have I felt it so keenly as I did with the first playing of Wells Hively's symphonic triptych in tender homage to Mexico. The composer's name was not unknown to me, but his music was. The *Tres Himnos* is a relatively early work, dating from 1946-47; it would be especially interesting to know what paths he has taken since then. On this lone evidence he is at the very least a musical landscapist of extraordinary gifts, able to evoke time and place and atmosphere with the most skillful use of essentially simple devices. His tonal textures are lucid across a panoramic spectrum, and there is a striking verisimilitude in his imagery. The more familiar Porter and Donovan pieces are especially welcome to the recorded repertory, the latter being, for all its programmatic overtones, a masterpiece of contemporary musical abstraction. The performances are splendid, and the reproductive quality of the entire disc (which was subsidized by the American Composers Alliance) is as nearly perfect as it is currently possible to achieve. The privately distributed disc need not detain us. Its contents might be described as pretentiously inconsequential but I hesitate to go this far because the performances are so obviously unworthy, and the sound so dull, that more favorable circumstances could conceivably make all the difference.—J.L.

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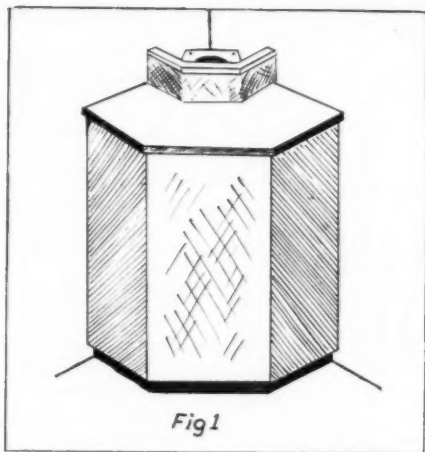


Fig 1

Building a Loudspeaker Enclosure--Part 2

by George F. Varkonyi

WE HAVE now reached the final stage in the construction of our Loudspeaker System. As is the case with most fine equipment, the final refinements and adjustments can make the difference between a mediocre system and a superlative one.

The Tweeter Unit

Basically, this unit is a stand to support the tweeter so that the maximum even distribution of sound is possible with the least interference. It has been found that cone speakers give excellent results when mounted facing upward. If such a unit is placed in a corner, the walls act as reflectors and give an unusually even frequency response.

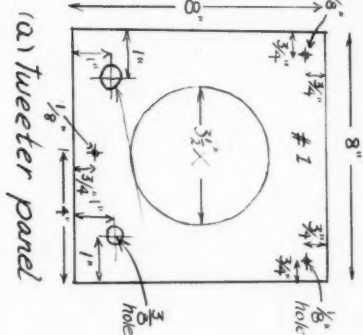
The recommended 5" Wharfedale tweeter comes already mounted on an 8" X 8" X $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood panel. Drill this panel as shown in Fig. 2a. Cut three pieces of 1" dowel 3" long and attach by means of screws to the panel (Fig. 1b). Cut the

parts shown in Fig. 2c. These can be made from the leftover from the main enclosure. Assemble as in Fig. 2d. Should it be necessary to cut another panel for the tweeter, $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood or masonite may be used. However, under no conditions use a panel thicker than $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The edge reflections around the cone caused by a thicker panel will impair the smooth response of the unit. On completion, this unit should be painted black. Actually, this is all there is to the high frequency unit. For the sake of compactness and ease of adjustment the crossover network and level controls are also to be mounted on this unit.

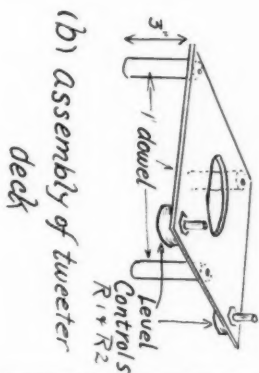
The Crossover Network

In the minds of many, the crossover network is a mysterious device in a black box. Actually it is a simple network that separates the audio frequency spectrum and channels the proper band of frequencies to the proper loudspeaker or loudspeakers.

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(a) Tweeter panel



(b) Assembly of tweeter deck

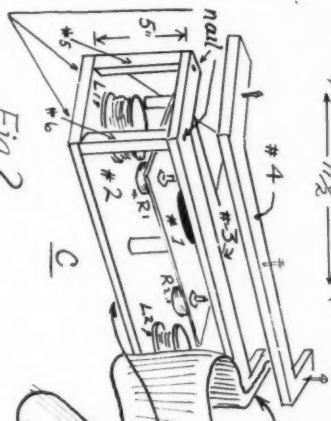
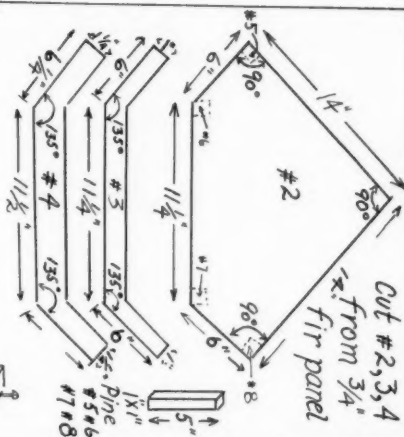
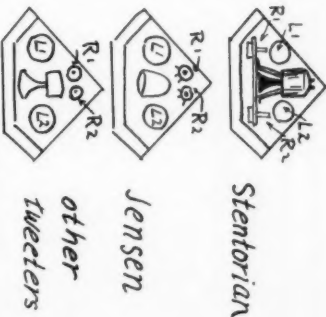


Fig 2

Suggested mountings for other units



staple or tack grill-cloth to top and bottom of unit then attach #4 to it by 1 1/4 x 5 brass screws. #4 should be finished to match top of main enclosure.

The crossover network

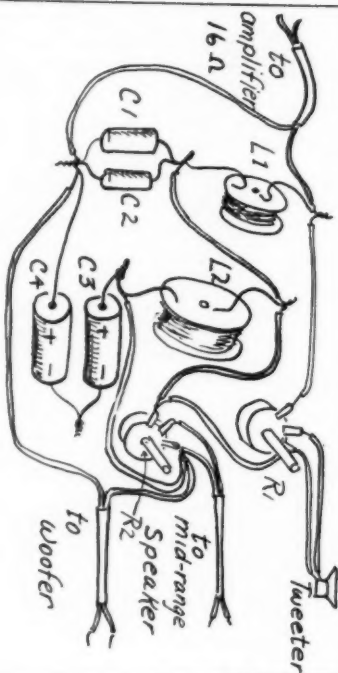
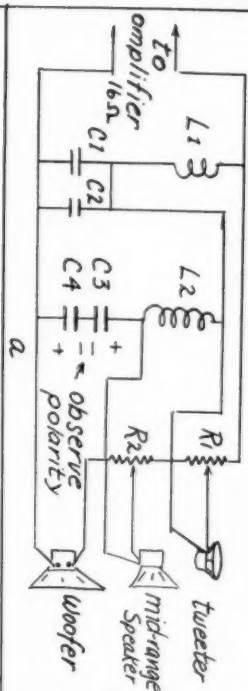
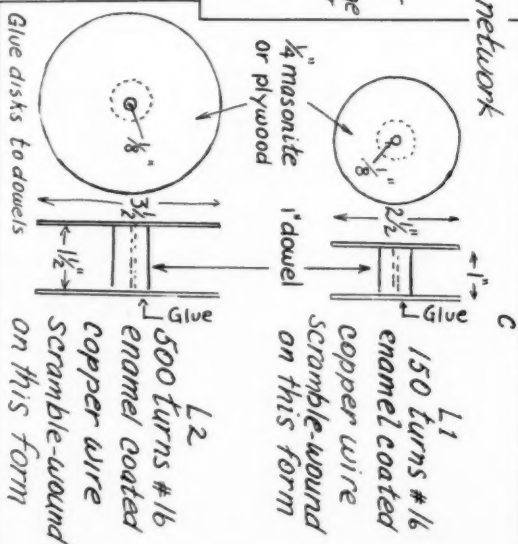
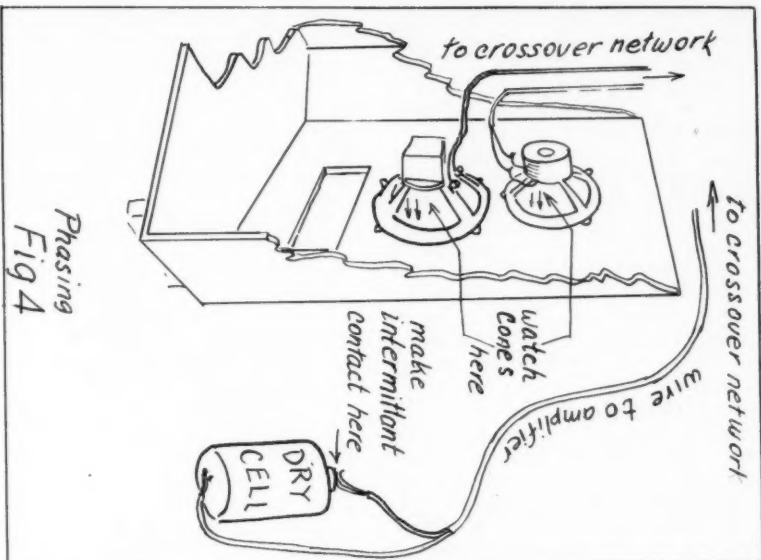


Fig 3

- L1 as above { total wire
 L2 as above { approx 300ft
 C1 2mfd 200wv paper cond.
 C2 .5mfd 200wv paper cond.
 C3 & C4 30Mfd. 150v electrolytic
 R1 & R2 50Ω 5-10w-wat. pot.





Phasing
Fig 4

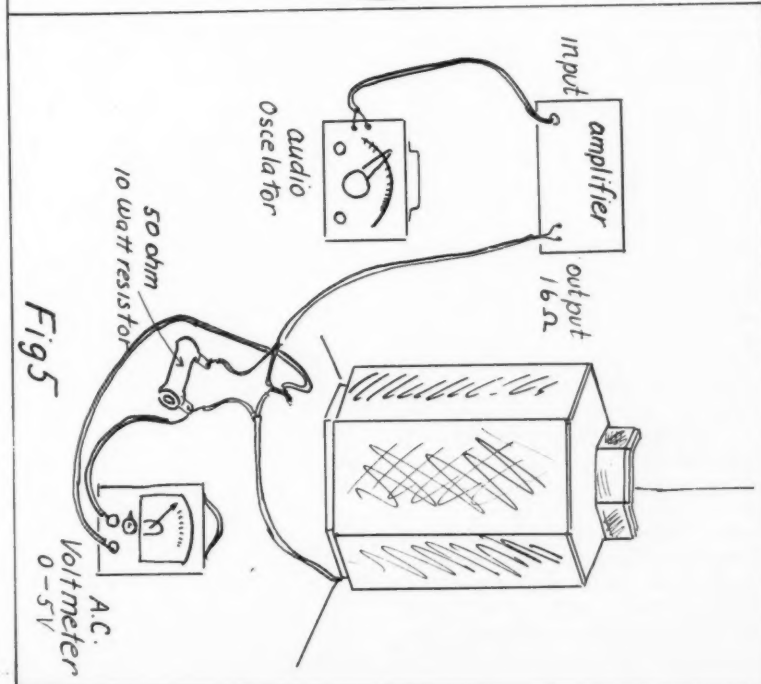


Fig 5

The network to be used with this enclosure consists of two coils and condensers, and is not difficult to construct. The constants are not critical and the materials used are readily available. Most text books on this subject lead us to believe that complex filters attaining an ultimate attenuation of 12db per octave or more are desirable, if not necessary. It must be remembered, however, that these books are generally written with large, theater-type, hornloaded enclosures in mind, where different path lengths exist for the high, middle and low frequency units. Under these conditions considerable acoustical interference exists at the crossover frequencies, and a sharp cut reduces the band in which this distortion takes place.

In our home unit, however, the middle and low frequency drivers are mounted on the same plane. Interference is therefore not a problem, and it is possible to do a superior job with a simple filter. Maximum accuracy is not essential in any of the components. In fact, electrolytic condensers are employed in the low frequency unit. Two are used. These are connected back to back, as shown in Fig. 3a and Fig. 3b. The crossover frequencies are approximately 500 cycles and 4,000. Two 50 ohm, 7 watt wirewound potentiometers are used as level controls to balance the system. These controls are mounted in the 3/8" hole on the tweeter panel. The coils are scramblewound on the two spools shown in Fig. 3c. Approximately 300 feet of #16 copper enamel coated wire is required. The spools are mounted by means of brass screws on the high frequency unit (Fig. 3c). The screws must be solid brass, not brass plated, since any magnetic material in the core of the coils will change the inductance and cause distortion.

Mounting and Phasing

All of the loudspeaker units should be mounted by means of bolts, nuts and washers. The use of wood screws is inadvisable as the vibration of the speaker frames will eventually loosen them. The connecting wires should be soldered to the speakers, or the wire strands should be

twisted and coated with solder and then looped around the binding posts for permanently good contact. Drill two 1/4" holes in the permanent back panel of the enclosure to feed the connecting wires to the loudspeakers. When all the units are connected, we are ready to phase the speakers. This means connecting the speakers in such a way that their diaphragms are working together. It is possible for one diaphragm to be moving outward as the other moves inward which causes cancellation and distortion.

First turn the level control of the mid-range speaker on full (clockwise), then turn the tweeter controls all the way down (counter-clockwise). If in doubt, disconnect the tweeter since damage may result to its delicate voice coils if it is not turned off. Next take a 1 1/2 volt (standard) flashlight battery and intermittently connect to the speaker input wire and at the same time watch the movement of the woofer and mid-range speaker cones (See Fig. 4). If the cones move in and out together as contact is made and broken, they are in phase. If one cone moves out as the other moves in, reverse the leads on one of the speakers. They will now be in phase.

Phasing the high frequency unit must be done aurally with both level controls on full. Feed a 4,000 cycle note through your speaker system. This may be obtained from an audio oscillator or frequency test record. While playing the 4,000 note, quickly reverse the leads to the tweeter and listen for greater output. An observer must stand a considerable distance from the unit to be able to judge. It is virtually impossible for the one manipulating the leads to determine the relative intensity. If there is no discernable difference, there is nothing to worry about.

Tuning the Port

A bass reflex enclosure is a resonant box and must be tuned to match the woofer cone resonance to obtain optimum results. As a general rule, large enclosures tune more broadly and are less critical. In an enclosure of bass reflex size, however, there is considerable advantage to be gained by

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proper tuning. This must be done after the enclosure is completed and all speakers are phased, and the unit has been placed in its permanent location with the back panel fully mounted.

Tuning requires the following (Fig. 5): a 50 ohm, 10 watt resistor, an A.C. voltmeter, and an audio oscillator. A gliding frequency test record can be substituted for the oscillator but it is more difficult to use. First connect the 50 ohm resistor in series with one of the speaker leads. Then connect one of the voltmeter leads to the loudspeaker lead (see Fig. 5). The leads are connected to the amplifier as usual. The audio oscillator is connected to the amplifier input. Sweep the audio oscillator through the range of 30 to 200 cycles. Two peaks should be noted on the voltmeter, one reading higher than the other. Next take a piece of plywood and block approximately 15% of the reflex port opening. Then sweep the oscillator again through the range of 30 to 200 cycles. The higher peak should be lowered by now. Repeat process, increasing or decreasing the port opening until the two peaks are equal in height. After carefully noting the amount of blocking needed to obtain desired results, then screw the panel on the inside of the enclosure to block permanently that part of the port. Now, screw back the back panel and your enclosure is complete.

The final adjustments are given with actual music of first-rate quality. The two balancing controls should be adjusted to personal taste, approximately 1/8 down on the middle and 1/4 down on the tweeter controls is average. However, in balancing adjustments let your ear be your guide.

* * *

A number of readers have inquired about making the enclosure larger. To this, I can only say the bigger the better, provided all parts are made rigid and the interior section is partitioned with rock-wool panels to prevent column resonance.

If the enclosure is in excess of 14 cubic feet, there is little advantage in a bass reflex enclosure. Omit the port and you will have all the advantages of an "infinite" baffle. I would recommend the

July, 1955

use of two 15" woofers to obtain optimum results. For the purist, there is an advantage to be gained by using four 8" speakers, in connecting series, parallel in place of the 10" middle speaker.

I would also recommend investigation of the excellent Stentorian T-12 tweeter. This unit is not cheap, but in my opinion it is well worth its price if silky highs are desired. It may be mounted facing out into the room in place of the cone tweeter.

* * *

Mr. Varkonyi and the editor would appreciate any comments from those who construct this enclosure, and also if possible pictures of the finished units. The editor would also like permission to publish any comments and pictures deemed of interest to the majority of readers.

SCHERCHEN AND BEETHOVEN

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 36; Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93. Westminster WL-5362, \$5.95. Symphony No. 4 in B flat, Op. 60; Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Westminster WL-5406, \$5.95. Hermann Scherchen conducting the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London.*

▲THESE performances might be called master classes by Scherchen in the art of conducting Beethoven. He has a reputation as a teacher in Europe and there are several younger conductors of today who owe their success to him. Here, we acquire an insight in musical control as well as of dynamics—the correct alterations of *pianissimo* and *fortissimo*. The spirit of the music is another thing, different from the intensified approach of Toscanini and the more relaxed animation of Weingartner. Scherchen's musicianship is highly personalized, remarkable in many ways for its exactitude and care. It is fascinating in its attention to detail, but often less so in its rhythmic spirit.

The *Adagio molto* opening of the *Second Symphony* is beautifully played, but the

All-gro con brio lacks emphasis on the *brío*. The slow movement is lovely, as indeed all of the slow movements of these works are. Such careful detailing does equal justice to all the voices of the orchestra, often notably in woodwind passages. The *Scherzo* lacks wings, but the finale is properly spirited. The *Eighth Symphony* lacks the lightness of Beecham and Toscanini, but there are no idiosyncracies of interpretation; rather, considerations of tempi. The *Allegro scherzando* is fascinatingly detailed, the *Menuet* is rather prosaic, the outer movements well played but with less vivacity than I, for one, like. The *Fourth Symphony* is most impressive in the *Adagio* opening and in the slow movement; the latter is beautifully played. While neither the first movement proper or the finale are earthbound, they do not soar as freely as they might have; they are often too firmly controlled. The *Fifth Symphony* emphasizes Scherchen's dominant qualities as a conductor. He achieves dramatic "effect" in the opening movement but without the driving energy of Toscanini. His control is assured and his feeling for drama convincing. Again, his attention to detailing makes his second movement an unusual musical experience. The third movement is well played with remarkable attention to dynamics. The finale is uneven; it seems to bog down in the middle, giving the effect of lumbering as though the conductor were intent on saving his dramatic thrust for the later pages. The remarkable thing about this performance is Scherchen's musical concentration and control rather than his insight; sometimes one feels he is too absorbed with the trees to visualize the woods as a whole. But no matter how one sums up this, or any of the other three performances, one must admit that it is music-making of an unusual order, the work of a leading orchestral technician.

The reproduction of the orchestra is vital, full bodied and well balanced with a wide gamut of dynamics—from whispered *pianissimi* to full *forti*. The sound is somewhat different than Scherchen's recordings made in Vienna, less of the full-bodied concert hall type of resonance.

One suspects the recording was made in one of the English-built studios which are generally ideally suited to balance since they are free of heavy reverberation. A lot of work and care went into the making of these recordings, I am sure, on the part of the conductor as well as the engineers.

—P.H.R.

OPERA SPOTLIGHT



CHABRIER: *Une Education manquée* (A Neglected Education) (Operetta in 1 Act); Christiane Castelli, Caudine Collart, Xavier Deprez, Orchestra Symphonique de Paris, Charles Bruck (cond.). Vanguard VRS 640, \$4.98.

▲A GOODLY PART of this operetta is spoken dialogue but it is so delightfully handled that one who does not understand French can enjoy it by following the libretto, which gives both the French and English texts. The music is the work of a genius who could handle the slightest subject with elegance, charm and subtle humor. And what a subject! Two young people have just been married but find themselves bashful and uncertain when alone. The bride expects advice from her aunt, the bridegroom from his grandfather. The aunt's advice is subtle but not elucidating; the grandfather's, in the form of a letter, is sentimentally reminiscent but uninformative. The bridegroom's former teacher is on hand and he looks to him for advice, but the teacher seems reluctant to give the young man such advice without counsel elsewhere. When he returns the two lovers are happily clasped in each others arms as a result of a thunderstorm. To suggest the youth of the bridegroom, the part was written for a soprano; likewise that of the bride. This makes for some confusion in a recording without recourse to the text. The three principals are excellent artists, fine singers and gifted in acting. The recording is excellent, bright and clear in quality. While the singers are given the spotlight, the conductor is careful to keep the or-

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July

chestra in correct focus with the voices. A delightful bit of nonsense with some exquisite music and some ingenious dialogue. Prescription: safe to take in frequent doses. —P.H.R.

●
GOUNOD: *Mireille* (Opera in 5 Acts); Janette Vivalda (Mireille), Nicolai Gedda (Vincent) Michel Dens (Ourrias), André Vessières (Ramon), Marcello Cortis (Ambroise), Madeleine Ignal (Vincinette), Christiane Gayraud (Taven), and others. Orchestra of the Paris Conservatoire, Elisabeth Brasseur Chorus, under the direction of André Cluytens. Angel set 3533-C, 3 discs, \$14.94.

▲BASED on Frédéric Mistral's Provençal epic poem, *Miréio*, Gounod's opera *Mireille* is presented on records for the first time in its entirety in this bright and colorful Angel album. Third of Gounod's operas in popularity, *Mireille* has had little success in America, but Paris has always relished it, a fact proved by the more than 750 performances the opera has received at the Opéra-Comique. Revived with great success at the Aix-en-Provence festival, in the actual settings of the dramatic story, during the summer of 1954, the opera was recorded a few days later by Angel with the forces of this revival intact.

Mireille is a pleasing work, though the operatically conventional Gounod was hardly the composer to realize the opportunities for weird and awesome effect in the scenes of the Val d'Enfer and the bridge over the Rhone at Trinquetaille. Here an unfettered genius such as Berlioz was needed. Nevertheless, Gounod has made a stab at surrounding his pretty tunes with local color. There is a *farandole*, a popular Provençal *Chanson de Magali*, a shepherd's song with bagpipe, rustic choruses, and an attempt at depicting the arid and blistering desert of la Crau. The opening chorus, *Chantez, chantez, Magnanarelles* with its gay orchestral refrain is perhaps the most engaging part of a score that lacks ingenuity and imagination.

André Cluytens' conducting is one of the best features of this set, but the singing
July, 1955

of Janette Vivalda, a young soprano with a facile but shallow and unfocused voice, is not likely to make opera fans forget Robin and Micheau. Nicolai Gedda sings smoothly as the hero Vincent, and Michel Dens' Ourrias (Gounod's version of the Toreador) is one of the set's better elements. The famous Valse *O légères hirondelles* has not been included in performances since 1939 at the Opéra-Comique. However, Angel has thrown in this celebrated display-piece as a dividend on the final groves of the recording.

Recorded sound is up to Angel's best, and the booklet, replete with notes, libretto, drawings and photographs of the Provençal country, is one of the most elaborate ever issued—designed as a tribute to Mistral, Gounod, and the picturesque land of Provence. —M. de S.

●
JANACEK: *Aus einem Totenhaus*; soloists, Netherlands Opera Choir and Orchestra, conducted by Alexander Krannhals. Epic SC 6005, 2 discs, \$9.96.

▲WE OWE this recording to the 1954 Holland Festival commemorating the centennial of Janacék's birth. The opera was left incomplete at the composer's death, and the finishing touches were put on it by Bretislav Bakala. At the time of its world premiere in Prague, February 1931, one critic remarked, "Upon the whole, the opera gives the impression of a torso, unfinished, not definitely worked out." At the Holland Festival performance, a Japanese student was heard to say, "The music is more beautiful than the story. That is incongruous." To another critic it is "perhaps the most astonishing of all Janacék's works." In any event we must be grateful for the unique opportunity to hear and study a strange and nightmarish score, hardly likely ever to achieve popularity or far-flung performances, while we may question whether the composer's adaptation of Dostoyevsky's novel is really the stuff of which great operas are made. Of the word-setting we can form no opinion, as the original text is in Czech, and we hear it in German translation. Certain it is, however, that such melody or "effective"

writing, as there is, is confined to the orchestra: the voices simply interject their scarcely lyrical comments. Still, there is music in the background, and this may well assume grander proportions with repetition. The performance seems to me unusually fine, with a cast of voices always adequate and in some cases more than that. The conductor has obviously studied the score from the ground up, and for all the strangeness of the music it emerges with admirable clarity. —P.L.M.

SMETANA: *Dalibor* (Opera in 3 Acts); Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre, Jaroslav Krombholc (cond.). Colosseum set CRLP 181/2/3, \$11.94.

▲ THIS is an American issue of the Czech Supraphon set which we reviewed in our May issue (page 291). The recording is not quite as realistic, being at a somewhat lower level. However, the cheaper price of this release is in its favor, as the original Czech discs are not too easy to acquire. The same libretto, supplied by Supraphon with the original Czech text and a rather novel English translation, is included here. —P.H.R.

STRAUSS, JOHANN: *A Night in Venice*; Nicolai Gedda (The Duke), Erich Kunz (Caramello), Peter Klein (Pappacoda), Karl Doench (Delaqua), Hanna Ludwig (Barbara), Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Annina), also Speaking Roles, the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Otto Ackermann. Angel 3530B, 2 discs, \$10.98 or \$7.96.

▲ THIS issue can hardly fail to intrigue the admirers of Johann Strauss' operettas with an all-star cast of its kind, and the knowing Otto Ackermann at the orchestral helm. *A Night in Venice* is somewhat of a hodge-podge, but it has been successfully revived in our time. I cannot recall a performance that was the equal of this one, sung with such charm and spirit. Miss Schwarzkopf almost steals the show, but not quite, for Kunz, Gedda and Klein are singers with whom to reckon.

Strauss visited Italy before composing this operetta, where he discovered that the atmosphere and musical environment appealed strongly to him. It is said that on his return to Vienna, he brought Italy with him, and in Italy left an indelible memory with his Viennese dances. The subject of this operetta should have been congenial to him, but he failed to read the whole book—only the lyrics before he wrote the music, with the result that *A Night in Venice* was not well received at its first performance in Berlin, since the critics contended his melodies did not match the action of the story. If Strauss' music is often irrelevant to the nonsense of the story, it is nonetheless the magnet that attracts people to enjoyment of this work, and the manner in which that music is presented in this set is in its favor. The recording is excellent. —P.H.R.

MONIUSZKO *Halka* (Opera in 4 Acts); Natalia Sokolova (Halka), Irena Maslennikova (Zofia), Georgy Nelepp (Jontek), Pavel Lisitsian (Janusz), Mikhail Soloviev (Stolnik), Stanislaw Krasowski (Dziemba), others, Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. Colosseum CRLP 188/89, \$7.96.

▲ STANISLAUS MONIUSZKO (1820-1872) has been called "the Polish Verdi," and this, his best remembered opera, does suggest some influences of early Verdi. Since *Halka* was written in 1848, Moniuszko could hardly have known too much of Verdi. Yet, for all its Polish idioms, *Halka* definitely suggests Italian influences. The music is typical of its period, romantic melodrama with some striking effects and much theatricalism. Moniuszko is regarded as the most important Polish composer of the 19th century after Chopin in his native land. We are told that "his place in the development of Polish song is similar to the place which Schubert occupies in the history of the German *Lied*." He wrote some 300 songs and 15 operas. *Halka*, known mainly in Poland and Germany, has evidently been recognized by Russia in

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recent years. reciprocity and national is to Poland. Czar is for Cze

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▲ I D were guess back success know is fre true t condu other July,

recent years as a gesture of political reciprocity. More or less on lines of racial and nationalistic characteristics, *Halka* is to Poland what Glinka's *Life for the Czar* is for Russia and Smetana's *Dalibor* is for Czechoslovakia.

The recording does not suggest a stage presentation, though there can be no doubt that it was carefully prepared for performance in the Bolshoi Theatre. The singers are too prominent, the orchestra sometimes submerged and on its own rather gaunt in sound. The principal singers are highly capable artists, the men especially. The baritone Lisitsian has a fine resonant voice, and the Nelepp has a good lyric tenor. Sokolova, the soprano, has a fresh, youthful quality to her singing though with that shrillness associated with sopranos of her race. But she knows how to act with her voice and some of her singing is quite thrilling. The realism in this recording belongs to the singers. The recording is not up to our best standards but will probably suffice for those who favor the opera. At one point on side 1 and at another on side 4, the needle stuck in the fine grooving of my review copy. —P.H.R.

STRAUSS: *Salome*—Final scene (with Hetty Pluemacher and Wolfgang Windgassen); **BEETHOVEN:** *Fidelio*—*Ab-schuelicher! wo eist du hin?*; **WEBER:** *Oberon*—*Ozean, du Ungeheuer!*; **GOETZ:** *Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung*—*Die Kraft versagt!*; **GLUCK:** *Alceste*—*Ou suis-je?*; *Divinités du Styx*; Christel Goltz (soprano) with Wuertemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner, and Bavarian State Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. Decca DL 9778, \$4.98.

▲I DO not know when these recordings were made, but on internal evidence my guess would be that the *Salome* must date back to the first blush of Goltz' great success, before either of her two well-known complete performances. The voice is fresher, clearer, straighter and more true than in the now standard recording conducted by Clemens Krauss. On the other hand the balance is not nearly so

good, and Leitner is no match for his incandescent rival. Whether or not this scene was actually recorded as part of still another complete *Salome*, it carries us without cut from the delivery of Jokanaan's head to the end of the opera, and it includes the very essential speeches of Herod and Herodias, generally omitted from concert performances. There is one break in continuity to suggest that the recording has been dubbed from 78-rpm originals. In the more classic styles of Beethoven, Weber and Gluck the singer is far less at home; in the last named she also has the French language to hamper her free expression. The less familiar scene from *The Taming of the Shrew* is very much better; here the singing has real warmth and reserve. If I am not mistaken, the *Fidelio* and *Oberon* recordings are the same that were previously issued on two ten-inch sides.

—P.L.M.

RALPH KIRKPATRICK PLAYS SCARLATTI

D. SCARLATTI: *Sixty Sonatas*; Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). Columbia LP set (4 discs) SL-221, \$15.92.

▲THOSE familiar with Kirkpatrick's superb study of Domenico Scarlatti (Princeton University Press, 1953) will not need to be told that this recorded presentation of 60 of the Italian master's sonatas represents an enormous amount of love and enlightened scholarship. In his book, as you may know, Kirkpatrick has renumbered Scarlatti's five hundred and fifty odd sonatas in chronological order in order to restore the composer's original arrangement of many of the sonatas in pairs. He plays the sixty sonatas he likes best in that order, too. It makes a very effective presentation and a survey of Scarlatti's early, middle, and late period sonatas that can be easily followed. It also corrects the hap-

(Continued on page 360)



Revueltas suggests his amusement upon reviewing his bust by a sculptor, who is not identified.



Revueltas, at an earlier age, with his violin collection, when he was best known as a virtuoso.

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RECORD COLLECTORS are talking about . . .

... the belated recognition on LP records of the modern Mexican composer, **Silvestre Revueltas**, who might be called the Latin-American Erik Satie since his was an equally fertile imagination though more highly charged than the Frenchman's. He found inspiration for the making of music from such everyday phenomena as the accidental juxtaposition of two radio stations depleting each other's entertainment—*Ocho por Radio* (8 by Radio) (MGM E3155). "To solve this algebraic equation," the composer once said, "requires profound knowledge of mathematics." In another work, *Cuaunhnahuac* (Westminster W-LAB 7004), "he makes a burlesque of 'musical tourists'." While he could be intensely serious and even sublime in his music, he also liked a bit of buffoonery, as his *Musica para Charlar* (*Music for Chatter*) bears out. Some of the programmatic comments that he wrote convey his fondness for jesting. The imaginatively dynamic Revueltas is encountered in his primitive and savage chant, *Sensemaya* (Westminster W-LAB 7004), a work which Leopold Stokowski first introduced to American concert-goers and also recorded (Victor 12-0470, now withdrawn). Revueltas was a true child of this century, being born on December 31, 1899. His untimely death, from pneumonia precipitated by alcoholism, came in October 1940. In an autobiographical note sent to Nicolas Slonimsky, for the latter's book *Music of Latin America*, he

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amusingly said, "I do not think I was a child prodigy, but I showed some inclination for music quite early, as the result of which I became a professional musician. Contributors to this were some teachers of mine from whom I fortunately did not learn much, due probably to the bad habit of independence." Revueltas received instruction on the violin and in composition in his early 'teens. In 1916, he came to the United States for further studies. He began his conducting career in 1926 in this country, and in 1929 became assistant conductor of Chávez's orchestra in Mexico City. Slonimsky tells us that "Revueltas could be sardonic to the point of nihilism, but when emotionally moved he showed a deep lyric strain... His scoring is heterophonous, exploiting instrumental colors of contrasting qualities, against the background of multi-rhythmic percussion. The folkloric element is always present in Revueltas' melos... But Revueltas never quotes popular tunes; he prefers to recreate the native rhythms and melodies in his individual manner." His personality for striking orchestral effects lends itself especially to ambitious engineering enthusiasts which cannot fail to receive the blessings of the hi-fi brotherhood, hence Westminster's logic in releasing its latest Laboratory record (7004) with two of his pieces along with Mossolov's *Iron Foundry* and Chabrier's *Spanish Rhapsody*.

(Continued from page 357)

hazard arrangement of the pieces in the famous edition by Longo.

It would seem that more than half of Scarlatti's entire sonata output was created between the composer's 67th and 72nd birthdays. For those listeners acquainted only with the early exuberant sonatas more often than not used for display purposes by harpsichordists, a few words by Kirkpatrick about the seldom-played middle-period sonatas would not be amiss. "The music ranges from the courtly to the savage, from a well-nigh saccharine urbanity to an acrid violence. Its gaiety is all the more intense for an undertone of tragedy. Its moments of meditative melancholy are at times overwhelmed by a surge of extrovert operatic passion. Most particularly he has expressed that part of his life which was lived in Spain. There is hardly an aspect of Spanish life, of Spanish popular music and dance, that has not found itself a place in the microcosm that Scarlatti created with his sonatas. No Spanish composer, not even Manuel de Falla, has expressed the essence of his native land as completely as did the foreigner Scarlatti. He has captured the click of castanets, the strumming of guitars, the thud of muffled drums, the harsh, bitter wail of gypsy lament, the overwhelming gaiety of the village band, and above all, the wiry tension of the Spanish dance."

Of the sixty sonatas performed (these are published, by the way, by G. Schirmer, New York with notes by Kirkpatrick), your reviewer is especially taken with Kirkpatrick No. 44 (Longo 432), K.115 and 116 (L.407 and 452), K.119 and 120 (L.415 and 215) from the early period. From the middle period, the exquisite K.215, 259 and 260 (L.323, 103, and 124). From the late sonatas, K.517, 519, 544, and 545 (L.266, 475, 497, and 500). Kirkpatrick's playing throughout this set is uneven to say the least. It seems unequal technically to the demands of some of the sonatas; it wants a greater degree of expressive nuance in others. On the other hand, who could

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ask for the lovelier performance of K.260 or a more thrilling account of the dizzy K.120? And the same may be said for roughly half the sonatas represented. Assuming that these discs will eventually be issued separately I would recommend two of the four discs—one that would contain side 3 of the present set and one that would contain side 4 and /or 5. For the rest, one can find better playing on several of the discs Valenti has made for Westminster and on the superb record George Malcolm recently made for London.

—C.J.L.

GEZA ANDA PLAYS LISZT

LISZT: *Sonata in B minor, Mephisto Waltz, Concerto Etude No. 3 in D flat, Etude de Concert—La Campanella*; Geza Anda (piano). Angel LP disc ANG. 35127, \$4.98 or 3.48.

▲HERE is an outstanding recording, one of the most exciting keyboard records of the year. Promising as young Geza Anda has seemed in the past, he seems to have waited until now to give us really ripe pianism and what I assume to be his very best thinking about the 19th century romantic piano repertory at the moment. Certainly no one has played Liszt so well on records for many a day. Anda has technique in abundance, a tasteful way of using the piano's resources; and a care for the musical amenities in no way common. If there is anything at all missing in his work, it is that little bit of spontaneity that feeds a flame into an impressive blaze. In this view, no one else since Horowitz has given us such a *B Minor Sonata*; and that, friends, is an accomplishment. It is scarcely the easiest piece in the world to play, no matter how much skill you have. Next best would have to be *La Campanella*—really now, shades of Busoni! We look forward to Anda's new records and to his appearances in America this coming season.

—C.J.L.

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Notes and Reviews

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Couper

ORCHESTRA

ARNOLD: *English Dances*; the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. London LP LD-9178, \$2.98.

▲HERE is the most felicitous make-believe in the modern repertory—absolutely original “folk” dances, with just the right modal character (Mixolydian, Aeolian and Dorian) to simulate the real article. Malcolm Arnold is one of the more promising young Britons, his principal charm at the moment being a total lack of pretentiousness in tandem with a remarkable flair for instrumentation. Balletgoers know his *Rinaldo* and *Armida*, which is in the Sadler’s Wells repertory, but none of his several symphonies or concertos has been heard in this country as far as I know. We shall get them in due course, presumably, and in the meantime this little disc is a pleasant introduction to a little-known composer who will undoubtedly make a more substantial impress later on. Glorious sound. —J.L.

BARTOK: *Concerto for Orchestra*; Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia LP disc ML-4973, \$4.98.

▲HERE is a stunning account of Bartók’s modern classical masterpiece for orchestra. Ormandy gives a sober, carefully considered reading of music he clearly respects. There is happily not a moment of frivolity in his work (as there July, 1955

sometimes is), and only in the overfast finale is the enormously skillful Philadelphia Orchestra asked to do anything more than make music. Astonishingly detailed and beautifully shaped are the two slow movements; these sections will, I believe, make a distinct impression on anyone who hears them. I have certainly never heard them played with such poise and passion before. Almost as effective are the second and fourth movements with their humorous contrasts. Here is a recording so unusually fine that one may expect to hear it at audio expositions for quite a number of months.

In relation to its competitors, this new disc has only the van Beinum (London LP) to consider performance-wise and the recording for that version dates from the dawn of long-playing records. —C.J.L.

BORODIN: *Symphony No. 2 in B minor*; *Symphony No. 3 in A Minor (Unfinished)*; *Prince Igor—Overture*; L’Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. London LL-1178, \$3.98.

▲THE main interest in this record lies in the first LP version of Borodin’s *Symphony No. 3 in A minor (Unfinished)*. The composer sketched two movements, but left them incomplete when he died. Glazunov completed and orchestrated this score as well as the familiar *Prince Igor Overture*, also included on this release. The music is obviously Russian in character, but the orchestration is not as transparent and colorful as Borodin’s own. The

score is seldom played in concert for rather obvious reasons. Ansermet does his best to make this music come to life, but he is only partially successful. He seems to be more at home in the familiar and oft-recorded *Second Symphony*, which he treats with proper affection and spirit. His performance surpasses in some ways the fine Malko and Mitropoulos versions since he does not make the urgency of its drama obvious. The overture is exceptionally well played. The recording is splendid throughout.

—R.H.R.

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FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor*; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Guido Cantelli (conductor). RCA Victor LM-1852, \$3.98.

▲THIS performance offers little competition to the older Monteux performance except in matters of reproduction. In the opening movement, Cantelli does not seem to sense the true contrast of the themes. The slow movement fares better but the *finale* does not build as it should. One wonders whether this gifted conductor really likes this music; certainly he reveals little comprehension of its true characteristics. In sound, this performance lacks the tonal sumptuousness of the recent Ormandy release, the unhurried expressiveness of Furtwaengler, the sensibility of Rodzinski's straightforward interpretation, or the fervor and drama of the Paray version. The choice will remain a personal one.

—P.H.R.

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PROKOFIEV: *Peter and the Wolf*, Op. 67; Brandon de Wilde (Narrator); **BRITTEN:** *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Op. 34; Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky (cond.). Vox PL-9280, \$5.95.

▲THE ATTRACTION of this disc is definitely the twelve-year-old actor, Brandon de Wilde. I have always believed that Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, written for young people, would fare best with a child narrating the text, and this version proves my point. We've had the reading of the lines by Richard

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Hale (one of the best of the adult narrators), Grandma Roosevelt (who was the least satisfactory), Alec Guinness (who was exceedingly fine) and Wilfred Pickles (who was a bit overbearing with his British accents), but none of them succeeded in making the tale as close to childhood as it well might be. Young de Wilde narrates in that business-like fashion that an interested and assured child assumes when he's telling a tale to other children. Obviously his voice has been dubbed in, but we are only cognizant of this at the beginning where he speaks without the orchestra by the marked difference in background resonance between the voice and later the orchestra. The dubbing has been excellently contrived. Swarowsky plays both of these works well enough, but he misses the charm and humor in *Peter and the Wolf* and his performance of the Britten work is not the equal of van Beinum's for finesse or style. As recordings, both works are right out of Vox's Viennese top drawer for realism though somewhat heavy in reverberation, which does not make for ideal clarity. However, I can imagine a lot of listeners, young ones in particular, being attracted to this disc for the presence of young de Wilde—he's the main attraction.

—P.H.R.

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RACHMANINOV: *Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor*, Op. 18; Leonard Pennario (piano) and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. Capitol LP P-8302, \$4.98.

▲THE up-and-down Pennario is not up there this time, but how could it be otherwise when the field includes such as Anda, Rubinstein, and the late great pianist-composer himself? If you do not mind your Rachmaninov somewhat smaller-scale than tradition calls for, all right, because there is really nothing missing that is not, in the last analysis, a memory of the surging emotionalism that one originally associated with this music. The playing is clean, the accompaniment not unduly deferent, the sound typical of Capitol's recent best. But you are never once lifted by the music-making, and a

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RECORDS

NEW RELEASES

- *WN 18007 **Bloch:** Schelomo; **Bruch:** Kol Nidrei, Canzone
Janigro, cello; Rodzinski, Philharmonic Symp. Orch. of London
- *WN 18008 **Ravel:** Gaspard de la Nuit, Miroirs,
Pavane pour une Infante Defunte, Jeux d'Eau
Gianoli, piano
- *WN 18009 **Scarlatti:** Sonatas for Harpsichord (Vol. VIII)
Valenti
- *WN 18010 **Schumann:** Dichterliebe Op. 48, Liederkreis Op. 24
Munteanu, tenor; Holetschek, piano
- *WN 18011 **Mozart:** Divertimenti Nos. 3, 4, 9, 16 (K. 166, 186, 240, 289)
Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group
- WL 5240 **A day of Pilgrimage at Lourdes**
- WL 5336 **Debussy:** *Enfant Prodigue, Demoiselle Elue, Noel des Enfants*
Gorge, soprano; Legay, tenor; Cottret, bass; Joly, mezzo-soprano;
Inghelbrecht, Orch. du Théâtre des Champs Elysées
- WL 5340 **Chopin:** Sonata No. 2, Op. 35; 9 Etudes
Niedzielski, piano
- WL 5350 **Canteloube:** Chants Basques and Chants Occitans;
Tonadillas; Spain Today
Morondo, Agrupacion Coral de Camara de Pamplona
- WL 5358 **Duos Celebres**
Alarie, soprano; Simoneau, tenor;
Dervaux, Orch. du Théâtre des Champs Elysées

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Rodzinski, Philharmonic Symphony Orch. of London

performance of this work that doesn't do that is apt to leave you unaffected because there is not enough intellectuality in the score to hold your interest in the absence of striking virtuosity.

—J.L.

•
RAVEL: *Concerto in G; Concerto for Left Hand*; Jean Doyen (piano) with Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. Epic LP disc LC-3123, \$3.98.

▲AS FAR as size of ensemble, spirit, wit, color, and general style go, this well recorded disc could well be considered a model for performing Ravel's last two major works. Up to now, one has turned to highly polished surfaces of Blancard and Ansermet's performance (London LP) for satisfaction in this music. One can still turn to it for suavity and for maximum audible detail; but for nothing else that this new version (for all its faults) does not present more effectively. True enough, Doyen's playing is percussive and technically just up to scratch; but its intoxicating exuberance, its lively comments on the jazz styles Ravel was so attracted to make it seem preferable to Blancard's more sweetly melancholic treatment. Now the Lamoureux is not even the technical equal of Ansermet's Suisse Romande, but Fournet elicits just the right tonal colors and balances that Ravel would appear to have had in mind (only Parisian orchestras seem to play Ravel in that weightless, fiery manner) and puts them at the service of a rhythm that both a Harlem jazzman and a Paris Conservatory graduate could embrace. The result is something any admirer of Ravel is certain to enjoy.

—C.J.L.

•
ROUSSEL: *Le Festin de L'Araignée; Petite Suite, Op. 39; L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* conducted by Ernest Ansermet. London LP LL-1179, \$3.98.

▲THERE are two good versions of *The Spider's Feast* in the catalogues already, but we have needed a new *Petite Suite* for a long time. Ansermet's performances are shimmering, and the *frr* sound is a benediction. The dated Esoteric disc that

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introduced *Le Festin* to LP still stands up rather well; also it is coupled with the only available performance of *The Sandman*. The recent Mercury replacement, however, is one of Paray's outstanding achievements—and so are the *L'Apprenti Sorcier* and Fauré *Pelléas* that share the same record. I would not live so dangerously as to indicate any clear-cut preference between the two most modern of these three choices. Either of them is more than satisfactory, although the Mercury will give you more for your money if you do not happen to feel strongly about the *Petite Suite*. —J.L.

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SHOSTAKOVICH: *Ballet Suite No. 1, Op. 84*; **KABALEVSKY:** *The Comedians, Op. 26*; **PROKOFIEV:** *Love for Three Oranges Suite, Op. 33-a*; **BORODIN:** *Girl's Dance and Polotskian Dances from Prince Igor*; the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and Choir conducted respectively by Adolf Fritz Guhl, Arthur Rother, Rother again, and Karl Rucht. Urania LP URLP-7146, \$3.98.

▲BRASHLY bright sound, performances slightly rough but quite acceptable in this sort of program. The Kabalevsky has needed a new version for several years now, but I am not so sure that these couplings aren't too heavy a price to pay for the delights of this score. The Shostakovich is otherwise available on a Vanguard disc, paired with a *Romeo & Juliet Suite No. 2*, but the tapes for these were derived from Moscow and the engineering was only medium good. The Prokofiev has been issued a number of times, notably in the Désormière version coupled with *Li. Kije*. The Borodin has been done so well by so many other conductors that it would be pointless to mention all of them. In sum, this potpourri is a bargain if you want everything it offers. If not, shop around.

—J.L.

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SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 5 in B flat*; **MEDELSSOHN:** *Octet for Strings in E flat, Op. 20*; Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor LP disc LM-1869, \$3.98.

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▲THESE recordings are documents of Toscanini-N.B.C. broadcasts of past years. They show their age and are by no means the sonic equal of some of more recent Toscanini broadcast dubbings we have had from Victor. The readings of these two delectable works are characteristic of Toscanini, but not quite up to other performances he has given since the war of the same music. Both are firm in outline of phrase, both vibrate with the energy of vital rhythm, both preserve a fine classical balance of tonal weights. All the same, the Schubert begs for more warmth of spirit and a little more ease along with the *chic* elegance it receives. The *Octet*, too, asks for a little sweetness, and complains now and again of the full string orchestra treatment. Though the coupling makes this disc attractive, this listener prefers Beecham (in spite of prewar recording) for the Schubert (Columbia LP) and the Vienna Octet's performance (London LP) of the original instrumentation of the Mendelssohn.

—C.J.L.

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SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120*; **WAGNER:** *Siegfried Idyll*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. HMV LP disc LHMV-13, \$4.98.

▲THE BRITISH critics have been raving about Cantelli's performance of the finest of all the Schumann symphonies. For this taste, they are dead right. It is a swift, full-blooded, impassioned view of the score, performed note-perfect and in accordance with the composer's directions. Can one ask for more? Yes, listen to Furtwaengler and the Berlin Philharmonic (Decca LP) and feel the majestic throb of the entire period of 19th-century German romanticism; and at the same time take the several infractions of Schumann's tempi into account. A difficult choice, indeed! The same situation obtains with the *Siegfried Idyll*. Cantelli runs again smack into Furtwangler's excellent recording. And that's a compliment; for your reviewer was unprepared for the sweet warmth that Cantelli breathes into every

phrase of Wagner's touching poem on domestic bliss. But there it is; everywhere as convincing as anyone could expect. You pick either one you like, or both if you can afford them. —C.J.L.

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STRAUSS: *Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche*; *Don Juan*; **WEBER:** *Overtures to Der Freischuetz and Euryanthe*; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwaengler. HMV LP disc LHMV-19, \$4.98.

▲HERE there is the beautiful tonal glow, warm musicality, and preciseness of articulation and balances one expects from Furtwaengler and the Vienna Philharmonic. What is missing is the urgency and animation that all these scores demand. Search as one will one does not find the energy and volatility of Till, the demonic passion and drive of Don Juan, or the strong dramatic accents and contrasts of Weber's splendid overtures. And yet, the two Strauss tone poems represent Furtwaengler at his best. The recordings are pleasantly bright and sound-wise the present pick of the crop. However, for more effective versions of the music, this reviewer suggests Reiner for *Till*, Toscanini for *Don Juan* and the *Freischuetz*, and Boehm for *Euryanthe*.

—C.J.L.

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STRAVINSKY: *Story of a Soldier (L'Histoire du Soldat)*; Fritz Weaver (Reader), John Harkins (Soldier), FredERIC Warriner (Devil), and an instrumental ensemble conducted by Emanuel Vardi. Vox LP PL-8990, \$5.95.

▲THIS recording performs a valuable service. I am familiar with all of the arguments in favor of retaining original texts, but let us face the fact that *L'Histoire* is almost always heard *sans* any text at all because French just doesn't mean much to any American audience in quasi-narrative works of this kind. Now, at last, we have a *L'Histoire*, or rather a *Story*, that will have the maximum effect on English-speaking listeners. The new text, which Sidney Tillim contrived out of Rosa Newmarch's transla-

tion of Ramuz, includes a few lines that belong in the "remarks I doubt ever got made" category, and also the narrator's sing-song manner gets a little annoying at times. But at least the yarn is told, and the music is interpolated where it was meant to be, and that in itself is reason enough to welcome this disc with open arms. The sound is Vox's studio best, and Vardi's instrumental ensemble does a thoroughly workmanlike job.

—J.L.

■ **TARTINI:** *Concertos in F major and A minor*; Walter Schneiderhan (violin), Vienna Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. SPA-46, \$5.95.

▲ THE manuscripts of these two concertos by Tartini are in the archives of the Basilica di Sant' Antonio. They were photographed and brought to this country and now form part of the archives of Smith College. Gilbert Ross of the University of Michigan edited the scores and it is this edition that Walter Schneiderhan uses in this recording. Scored for solo violin and four-part string orchestra, the concertos are listed as *No. 76 (A minor)* and *No. 82 (F major)* in the Tebaldini catalogue of Tartini's works. The harpsichord continuo was realized by Mr. Ross. The present performances are generally satisfactory, although there could be more resonance in the recording. There are all too few performances of Tartini's works available today, so Mr. Schneiderhan's vigorous and ingratiating readings may be recommended.

—R.H.R.

■ **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23*; **GRIEG:** *Concerto in A minor, Op. 16*; Friedrich Wuehrer (piano), Vienna Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. Vox PL-9000, \$5.95.

▲ IF Friedrich Wuehrer's performance does not say the last word about the Tchaikovsky, it goes quite a way towards doing so, for it is forcefully yet poetically played, with enough bravura to make the most jaded listener sit up and take notice. There have been many fine versions in the

past, notably those by Solomon, Anda, Rubinstein, Horowitz and Cherkassky; it is high praise to say that the present version holds its own in this splendid company. The score is contained on one side without cuts. On the reverse we have an equally vivid rendition of Grieg's *Piano Concerto*. If it fails to erase memories of Lipatti, Curzon or Novaes, it has many attractive qualities nonetheless. One is never conscious of Mr. Wuehrer's technique, as such, for he is first and foremost a musician, and never uses display for its own sake. In each concerto Heinrich Hollreiser provides sympathetic support. The recording is excellent, except for some loss of quality in the inner grooves.

—R.H.R.

● **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Manfred Symphony, Op. 58*; Philharmonia Orchestra, Paul Kletzki (cond.). Angel 35167, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲ TCHAIKOVSKY'S *Manfred* is a picturesque symphony based on Byron's dramatic poem. In some ways, it is a hybrid work since the composer admittedly sought influences from other composers with the result, as the reviewer in the November 1954 issue of *The Gramophone* has said, "Manfred shows us Tchaikovsky under the spell of another." Tchaikovsky seems to have thought highly of this work in the beginning, but later he disliked it intensely. Its length is made apparent by its overweening emotional insistence, a fact that Tchaikovsky seems to have recognized since in a letter he suggested the excisions that Kletzki and Toscanini make in the score, cutting the playing time down from 65 minutes to around 49. The reviewer in *The Gramophone* was somewhat irate about these cuts which occur in the second, third and fourth movements. However, familiarity with a Russian performance by Gauk and the Bolshoi Symphony, which is said to be complete (I have been unable to acquire a score), finds me preferring this latest version despite its cuts, as Kletzki is a more imaginative conductor with greater sensitivity and feeling. Indeed, Kletzki seems

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closer to the heart of the music than Toscanini, whose performance for all its vivid forcefulness is often less moving. Moreover, the reproduction of Kletzki's performance is richer and warmer, a more realistic manifestation of an orchestra where fidelity and realism are fully exploited. The Toscanini issue is now five years of age. There are points in balancing in the newer recording that are not as well observed as Toscanini did, but the overall effect will probably please the majority. If one already owns the Toscanini and finds it reproductively satisfying, there will probably be no incentive to duplicate or replace. An uncut version by a reputable conductor would be welcome, but Mr. Gauk is not that man.

—P.H.R.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Serenade in C, Op. 48*; **PROKOFIEV:** *Classical Symphony, Op. 25*; the RIAS Symphony Orchestra of Berlin conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. Decca LP DL-9737, \$4.98.

▲FRICSAY is one of those rare conductors who never lets you down in the one vital respect—you can always listen to him, always *must* hear him through, even when his approach happens to seem to you ill-advised and somehow alien to the work at hand. Bernstein is like that, and Paray, and above all Stokowski. You cannot but sense a brilliant intellect at the helm, and their commanding presence demands attention. Fricsay's tempi in both the Tchaikovsky and the Prokofiev are considerably slower than we have been accustomed to expect—in their balletic metamorphoses as *Serenade* and *Gala Performance* these interpretations would be virtually impossible to dance to. But within reasonable limits a conductor is entitled to take many more liberties than tradition permits, and by no stretch of the imagination can Fricsay be found guilty of bad taste. These are exquisitely molded, all-of-a-piece, however individual, conceptions, responsively performed and spaciouly recorded. There is less than the usual modicum of surface noise.

—J.L.

July, 1955

VILLA-LOBOS: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 8; Momoprecoce—Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra*; Magda Tagliaferro (piano) and L'Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Francaise conducted by the composer. Angel LP 35179, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲FIRST recordings of both works. Neither of them seems to have much form, but they hold one's attention throughout by their sheer listenability. The homage to Bach is in no sense Bachian, as its more familiar companion pieces are not. It is simply a four-movement suite of *Latino* tunes, engagingly strung together with tricky and variegated rhythms. The *Momoprecoce* is a pastiche on themes from the same composer's *Carnival of Brazilian Children* for piano. As this title suggests the longer work is a flimsy but artful array of spirited quasi-folk themes, all fun and frolic. The orchestral playing is quite good, considering how incompetent a conductor Villa-Lobos has otherwise shown himself to be. The sound is excellent.

—J.L.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH: *Eight Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord* (One for Unaccompanied Flute); John Wummer (flute) and Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). Westminster set WAL-216, 2 discs, \$11.90.

HANDEL: *Ten Flute Sonatas*; John Wummer, Fernando Valenti and Aldo Parisot (cello). Westminster set WAL-218, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲NOT so long ago, we had a set of the six *Flute Sonatas* of Bach played by Julius Baker and Sylvia Marlowe (Decca DX-113). The two additional sonatas in this issue—the *G minor*, for flute and harpsichord, and the *A minor*, for unaccompanied flute—are attributed to Bach. In November 1950, Vox issued a set (now withdrawn) of the six authentic sonatas and the *G minor* performed by Fernand Caratte and Marcelle Charbonnier. (PL-6160). The latter has long been valued

by me for the poised artistry of the flutist and the fine ensemble playing of the two performers. Both Baker and Wummer are two of the great flutists of our time, but both are essentially identified with symphonies. Both perform in a straightforward manner with a virtuosic flare that is praiseworthy. Baker has the larger tone, but Wummer's is somewhat warmer. Caratge, whose breath is too apparent in the recording, is more concerned with the delicacy of Bach's workmanship than either Baker or Wummer. The balance in the Westminster is excellent, though the Decca is somewhat fuller in sound. If one wants a set of all the sonatas, I lean toward the Westminster since Valenti is a brilliant performer quite in keeping with Wummer. However, Miss Marlowe is equally expert. It might be noted that the most important of these works are the sonatas for obbligato clavier and flute (the 4th, 5th and 6th in the recording) (see review page 98 in our November 1950 issue).

In Bach and Handel's time, the flute was often called the Royal Instrument as it was played by many royal amateurs. We all know of Frederick the Great, who wrote music for the flute. One of his concertos is on LP. It is not surprising that both Bach and Handel wrote works for an instrument as popular as the flute in their time. Geiringer, in his fine booklet with the Handel set, tells about the German or transverse flute's replacement of the recorder, since it was less mechanical than the latter. While some of Handel's and Bach's flute sonatas may have been performed on the recorder in their day, they are best served by the flute. Baker and Wummer both play the seven sonatas of *Opus 1*, but the latter adds three earlier sonatas written in Halle by the composer in his 'teens. Handel learned much from the Italians, as his flute sonatas prove. They are, in their own way, equally as delightful and soberly expressive as Bach's works. Here, Wummer is the preferred performer, for his tone is warmer and stylistically he is seemingly better informed than Baker. Moreover, he and his adroit partner are better recorded, and since the works are

recognized as trio sonatas the inclusion of a cellist makes for a better as well as rightful ensemble. (A score is included with the Handel set.) —P.H.R.

HANDEL: *Flute Sonatas, Nos. 1, 4, 5 & 9, Op. 1*; Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute) and Isabelle Nef (harpsichord). Oiseau-Lyre OL-50040, \$4.98.

▲THESE would be good samplings of Handel's flute sonatas if the performances and recording were better. Neither player seems sympathetic to the music. Rampal has artistically identified himself more persuasively with the music of other composers. It is a matter of style, to which Wummer and Valenti seem closer linked than these French players. The reproduction is not only lacking in proper resonance but suffers from pre-echo and even tape hum. —P.H.R.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartets (Vol. 3) Op. 127, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135*; Hungarian String Quartet; Angel LP set (4 discs) 3514D, \$19.92.

▲THE FINAL volume in the Hungarian Quartet's project of recording all the Beethoven string quartets has arrived, and it was worth waiting for. It contains as listed above, Beethoven's last great quartets and the *Grosse Fuge*. These works, unique in the history of music, constitute in the words of J.W.N. Sullivan "a vision of life." Moreover, they are the final thoughts of a prodigiously accomplished creator so close to the truth about what lies in the furthest recesses of that deep, mysterious pit we call the human heart as to be frightening. To suffer, to give thanksgiving, to love, to feel the throb of life—and finally to communicate these things with no hesitation, no reserve, no shame in a form so wondrously strange (emotion alone seems to hold the structures together) is Beethoven's eternal glory and perhaps our most priceless 19th century musical legacy.

Angel has given the Hungarian Quartet resonant, spacious recording that, though it sacrifices a little detail, is most satisfying to the ear. This recording along with the

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Haydn Society engineering for the Vegh Quartet's version of the same music represent the sonic standards of the moment. As for the playing: though the Hungarian's work is satisfying, one still regards the Budapest String Quartet's performances as the most effective heard so far on records. The Hungarian comes close, but it does not quite achieve the Budapest's purity of tone, its seemingly instinctive discovery of just the right tempo, its sharply etched outline of phrase, or its rhythmic alacrity. The use of a more opulent tone does, however, allow the Hungarian to attain heights at certain moments seldom equalled by other organizations one remembers. Unusually beautiful in this respect is the exalted third movement of *Op. 132* and the heavenly slow movements of *Op. 127* and *135*. In those sections that call for dynamic energy one turns to the demonic final movement of *Op. 131* for an example of the Hungarian's best work.

Two points in favor of the Angel set is the inclusion of pocket scores for each quartet and the fact that the Budapest recordings are spread over five LPs.

—C.J.L.

CORELLI: *12 Church Trio Sonatas, Op. 3; 12 Chamber Trio Sonatas, Op. 4;* Musicorum Arcadia. Vox DL-163, 3 discs, \$19.95.

▲HERE is another handsomely packaged issue of Italian Baroque music from Vox. The three discs come in an attractive album, housed in a durable box on which is reproduced in full color a figured detail of the Gothic altar at Poeggstall, Austria, suitable for framing. The scholarly notes are by Joseph Braunstein of the New York Public Library, Music Division. The music is worthy of its presentation, for Corelli was one of the great violinists and composers of his time. His *Church Sonatas, Op. 3* are the most imposing of his works, apart from his *Concerti Grossi, Op. 6*, which are his greatest compositions. These *Church Sonatas* were for use in the church in Corelli's time. Neither this set nor that of *Op. 4*, which was written for per-

formance outside of the church, were intended by the composer to be heard at one time in their entirety and, for all their beauty and rhythmic fluency, they are best enjoyed in small doses. Consistent familiarity will establish favorites. The trio sonata, a popular form in Corelli's day, comprised two violins against a cello and figured bass—the latter realized by an organist in the *Church Sonatas* and by a harpsichordist in the *Chamber Sonatas*.

The performances by a group of Italian musicians, headed by violinist Alberto Potronieri, are exceptionally fine, with pulsating rhythms, warmth of feeling and a stateliness appropriate to the loftiness of the composer's intentions. There is no doubt that these players dedicated themselves to the preparation of a musical task for which they were better suited than the scholarly German musicians that have performed the Vivaldi works, also issued by Vox. The recording has a purity of tone and a realistic naturalness that permits the listener to fall under the spell of the music and the players expressive artistry.

—P.H.R.

BRAHMS: *Quartet No. 3 in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2; Quartet in B flat, Op. 67;* The Vegh Quartet. London LL-1142, \$3.98.

DOHNANYI: *Quartet No. 3 in A minor, Op. 33; DVORAK: Quartet in F, Op. 96 (American);* The Hollywood String Quartet. Capitol P8307, \$4.98.

FAURE: *Quintet No. 2 in C minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 115;* Gaby Casadesus and the Guilet String Quartet. MGM E3166, \$3.98.

GRIEG: *Quartet in G, Op. 27; RACHMANINOV: Quartet in G minor;* The Guilet String Quartet. MGM E3133, \$3.98.

SCHUMANN: *Quartet in F, Op. 41, No. 2; Quartet In A, Op. 41, No. 3;* New Music Quartet. Columbia ML-4962, \$3.98.

▲THE VEGHS achieve a rare exactness in timing in their performance of the Brahms quartets. While there is requisite boldness in their playing, they seem emotionally on the whole somewhat restrained. Of other versions of *Op. 51, No. 2*, that of the Hollywood Quartet is more emotionally satisfying than either this or the Curtis Quartet renditions. The finest performance of the *Op. 67* is the Busch Quartet, though not as well recorded. The recording of the Vegh ensemble is well balanced and tonally quite lovely.

Dohnányi wrote his three quartets in the open decade of this century. The influence of Brahms has been noted, but that or any other influence traced by others is more a formal than emotional one. Dohnányi's third quartet opens with an impassioned movement that is temperamentally removed from Brahms. The second movement is an ingratiating set of variations, and the finale is brilliant, lively and somewhat satirical. The performance is an admirable one for its vitality and sensitiveness. The "American" quartet of Dvorak remains one of his best beloved works. The Hollywood players give as fine a performance as any extant, and Capitol engineers do justice to the ensemble both in this and the other quartet, notably in matters of balance and tonal realism.

As an admirer of Fauré, I welcome this performance of his second quintet, written in his seventy-sixth year. Age did not diminish his melodic gifts or his vehemence. Rather, it ripened his workmanship. The poetic delicacy and finesse of his artistry are attributes of a musical mind of elegance and refinement. Fauré can hardly be called a dramatic composer; his ardor is tempered like that of a poet or painter who favors subtlety, and yet he has vitality and endless spontaneity. Those who have no appreciation for artistic discretion in charm fail to enter into Fauré's kingdom which in these times seems a lost dream world. This quintet is a beautiful work; its depth of emotion is attained in the sad *Andante moderato*, but all four movements are equally impressive. Fauré's

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alterations of his themes are subtle and not always clear; but being highly imaginative they become of absorbing interest to the willing listener. The performance is a most expressive one with a rare balance between piano and strings. It suggests considerable preparation. The recording is excellent though intimate in its subdued acoustical characteristics.

More reverberation would have added to the pleasure of the Guilet's fine performances of the Grieg and the unfinished quartet of Rachmaninov. Both works would have profited handsomely with the warmer tonal qualities and recording characteristics associated with the Budapest Quartet. Grieg's string quartet has more rugged vigor than we usually find with his music. Cobbett points out that it "is unique in that all its themes are derived from that of the opening." Grieg's handling of his themes is, to say the least, capricious. The work with its orchestral effects is more of a suite than a quartet but, as Cobbett says, it possesses "so many beauties and so intense an inner life that it is one of those works that arouse enthusiasm." Many listeners will welcome its advent on LP, just as audiences express their approval whenever it is performed in the concert hall. The Rachmaninov sections from an early quartet—a *Romance* and a *Scherzo*—are surprisingly well written for the medium. The *Scherzo* lacks essential spontaneity, but the *Romance* is a lovely example of the songful type of elegaic music for which the composer has long been admired.

The Schumann quartets have been previously recorded—*No. 2* by the Curtis Quartet and *No. 3* by the New Italian Quartet. Both performances have their artistic merits, but the performances here are more inspired. The New Music group are among the most gifted of all the new ensembles, and their performance of the *F major Quartet*—a work over which string players usually shake their heads—is stronger and more impassioned than that of the Italian players. They worked hard to put this quartet over with such convincingly artistry. The *F major* is not a grateful work for the players

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but no one would guess it from this sensitive performance. Beautiful and romantic music, it is Schumann's finest quartet. Columbia's recording is exceptionally fine both in balance and tonal warmth. —P.H.R.

★ **WALTON:** *Facade—An Entertainment* (Complete); Dame Edith Sitwell and Peter Pears (speakers) with the English Opera Group Ensemble conducted by Anthony Collins. London LP LL-1133, \$3.98.

▲LONG ago it was established that you could eliminate all the narration from *Facade* and still have a swell piece of music, entirely fit to be offered with only a minimum of scissors-work here and there. Now that the LP compulsion for anything complete or authentic is upon us, it was inevitable that someone would get around to giving us *Facade* in its original form. I say it's nonsense, but then it wasn't meant to be anything else. Dame Sitwell's prose, or whatever it is, to me is utterly incomprehensible, although I do not pretend to be a literary type and do not insist, therefore, that all others should find it so. I just can't imagine that one could do otherwise. Fortunately, London has included a complete text with the recording so that the curious may study the thing at leisure. If it be a masterpiece, pardon me. I'll take the music by itself, thank you. But this new issue would be exactly the right thing for a party, especially if the host should want to cut off the consumption of spirits forthwith. Ten minutes of this gibberish and anyone would swear off alcohol. —J.L.

KEYBOARD

★ **BACH:** *The Well Tempered Clavier* (Book I); Joerg Demus (piano). Westminster LP set (2 discs) WAL-221, \$11.90.

▲THERE can be little doubt that this is best solo playing Demus has offered us up to now. One feels a greater tonal control, rhythmic steadiness, a more

careful modeling of phrase than he has previously afforded his listeners. I do not mean to imply that Miss Rosalyn Tureck could not teach Demus more than a trick or two about playing the *Well Tempered Clavier*; she could. But what is important is that one can listen to Bach's music, seldom being disturbed by musical or stylistic distortions. This is Demus' accomplishment and at this point in his career he should be proud of it—and keep on working at expanding the range of his expressive powers.

Westminster's recording is not quite "grand prize," but certainly it is serviceable. A valuable pocket score accompanies these discs. —C.J.L.

★ **BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata No. 29 in B flat, Op. 106 (Hammerklavier)*; *Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109*; Istvan Nadas (piano). Period LP disc SPL-718, \$4.98.

▲IT is a formidable assignment Istvan Nadas has been given for his recording début—perhaps a bit too formidable. For in spite of his extraordinary command over the capacities of his instrument and the musicality of his interpretative conceptions, Nadas plays too politely, without the passion that this great music demands. To be sure, it is no mean achievement to play all the notes Beethoven wrote, and surely it is an accomplishment not to make one ugly sound during the hour or so it takes to play these thorny scores; but without the throbbing life latent in the notes reaching the listener, can there be a sense of fulfillment? I think not; and for that reason, I must respectfully recommend Gulda or Solomon for the *Hammerklavier* and Schnabel or Solomon for *Op. 109*. Nadas, by the way, is Hungarian born and now associated with the Venezuela National Conservatory of Music. He was well received when he made his New York debut in 1954. He is still a young man, I believe; his career will be watched with interest. Anyone with so much technique ever represents a strong growth potential. —C.J.L.

★ **CHOPIN:** *Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 35*; *Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op.*

58; Julius Katchen (piano). London LP disc LL-1163, \$3.98.

▲KATCHEN brings to this task an impressive technique, good musical feeling, and an appreciation of the style involved. What he is unable to do satisfactorily is to unify these difficult-to-hold-together works. One searches in vain for the grand line in either sonata. Katchen's ideas about the *B flat minor* are more stimulating than his thoughts on the other sonata. The pianist is well supported from an engineering point of view. —C.J.L.

●
PACHELBEL: *Toccata in C; Fugue in C; Toccata in F* (The Apse organ); Chorale preludes: *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland; Wie schoen leuchtet der Morgenstern; Warum betruerst du dich, mein Herz; Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* (The Transsept organ); **WALTHER:** *Concerto del Sig. Meck, appropriato all' organo*; Chorale preludes: *Ach schoenster Jesu, mein Verlangen; Aus meines Herzens Grunde; Warum betruerst du dich, mein Herz; Allein Gott in der Hoeh' sei Ehr'* (The Transept organ); Luther Noss (Holtkamp Organ, Battell Chapel, Yale University). Overtone OVER 8, \$5.95.

▲LUTHER NOSS' second organ program is in every way as fine as the first. The two composers are more or less contemporaries of Bach, and especially their beautiful chorale preludes make an interesting study in connection with his compositions on these same tunes. The organ, too, is a subject for study. It is a reproduction of a baroque instrument, built for the chapel at Yale in 1951. Actually it is two separate and complete organs. Professor Noss, who is Dean of the Music School at Yale, plays with a lively rhythmic sense and nicely varied registrations. This is one of the best organ recordings I have heard. —P.L.M.

●
SCARLATTI: *Twelve Sonatas*; Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). Westminster LP disc WL-5359, \$5.95.

▲THIS is Volume 7 of Valenti's attempt to make available all 550 of Domenico

Scarlatti's harpsichord sonatas. Valenti is still working under a full head of steam. His work is still as vital, as arresting as it was when he accomplished that great first volume. Looking back over his Scarlatti sets, one marvels at his fabulous technique and that burning-coals quality that is characteristic of his best way of expressing himself. If the man lacks a thing at all, it would be just a bit more poetic coloration in a few of the meditative sonatas. Westminster's recording in this series continues to be ideal. —C.J.L.

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A. SCARLATTI: *Toccata No. 7 in D minor*; **SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE MASTERS OF THE 17th & 18th CENTURIES:** *Sonatas in D major & G major (Pedro Antonio Avondano); Sonata in D major (Davidde Perez); Sonatas in G minor & D minor (Sebastian Albero); Sonata in A major (Jozé Joaquin Dos Santos); Sonata in D major (Francisco Xavier Bachixa); Sonata in B flat major (Joao Cordeiro Da Silva)*; Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord). Oiseau-Lyre OL-50032, \$4.98.

MASTERS OF THE HARPSICHORD—
ITALIAN & GERMAN: *Toccatas in D minor & A minor (Durante); Toccata in G minor (Della Ciaia); Balletto di Mantua (Greco); Sonata in C minor (Marcello); Toccata in D minor; Sarabande in D minor (Richter); Variations on the popular Air "Auf die Mayerin" (Froberger); Fantasia in C major (Pachelbel); Gigue luthée (Kuhnau); Allemande, Capriccio, Minute, Aria (Handel)*; Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord). Oiseau-Lyre OL-50043, \$4.98.

▲THESE two records, the second and third of Oiseau-Lyre's series entitled "Masters of the Harpsichord" (the first release, by I. Nef, was reviewed last August), are played on a Pleyel instrument in stunning fashion by Gerlin. There are times when he misses notes, but he plays with such outstanding musicianship one can forgive many things. The lengthy *Toccata* by Alessandro Scarlatti is in three main sections, the first marked *Allegro*,

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Adagio, Presto & Veloce, the second a *Fugue* and the last, 29 *Variations* on the "Folia" theme. It is a grand work, performed in a most impressive style. One is constantly reminded of Domenico Scarlatti listening to the collection of Spanish and Portuguese music of the 17th and 18th centuries. These short pieces abound with life and color, and make very pleasant listening. Most of the composers seem to be new to records; their neglect has been shameful, for they have many novel effects, and cast light on a relatively unfamiliar period in musical history.

The other disc contains a delightful collection of harpsichord music by some familiar as well as unfamiliar names. Perhaps the outstanding selection on the record is the magnificent set of variations by Froberger, played here with a wealth of imagination and style. The variety of the instrument is exploited to its utmost and makes a most pleasurable experience. The Italian selections are no less attractive.

The recording is well-balanced and clean, with plenty of room resonance. This pair of discs may be placed among the finest harpsichord releases currently available.

—R.H.R.

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SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9; Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13*; Telefunken LP disc LGX-66029, \$4.98. **HAYDN:** *Sonata No. 23 in F*; **MOZART:** *Sonata No. 17 in D, K.576*; Telefunken 10" LP disc TM-68023, \$2.98. Geza Anda (piano).

▲THE QUALITIES that one heard and admired in Geza Anda's recorded debut (Angel LP disc 35046) are in short supply throughout this pair of discs. One suspects, indeed, that these performances were recorded before the Angel ones. The clues for this supposition are the surface noise of these new records (sounds like dubbings from 78s), the less-than-first-rate sound, and above all Anda's playing of the *Etudes Symphoniques* (which was represented on the Angel disc in question). Here there is much less of the poise, the care for phrasing, the fiery spirit one remembers. Moreover, the interest is not sustained throughout

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as it was before. The less said about the *Carnaval* the better. The heaviness, the calculation one feels in so many of the sections (especially the first three, the *Reconnaissance*, and the *Marche des Davidsbündler*) is no part of Schumann's inspiration. Anda's technique, mind you, is extraordinary in all these performances. It is simply not at the service of appropriate musical impulses. His dry, hurried way of bolting through the corner movements of the lovely Mozart and Haydn sonatas is ample proof of this fact, if any is needed after hearing the Schumann.

—C.J.L.

WECKMANN: *Toccata in E minor*; **PACHELBEL:** *Aria Sebaldina with Variations in F minor*; **BOEHM:** *Praeludium-Fuga-Postludium*; **RATH-GEGER:** *Four Pastorellas for Christmas Time*; **FISCHER:** *Prelude and Chaconne in G*; **SCHEIDT:** *Variations on the Cantio Belgica: Ah, you fine horseman*; Erwin Bodky (harpsichord and clavichord). Unicorn LP disc UN-1002, \$5.95.

▲THIS recital of keyboard works by composers from the generation before J.S. Bach and from the one contemporary with the Leipzig Cantor will be interesting to students of the Baroque period and probably not quite so stimulating to those interested only in music. Weckmann, Boehm, and Scheidt are of the north German school and exercise more musical force on modern ears than the others of southern Germany. The music of the former group holds our attention with its daring harmonies, complex forms, and striking emotional communication. Indeed the *Preludium* by Boehm and the *Toccata* by Weckmann are worthy of old Bach himself. The composers of southern Germany during the Baroque period give us sweet melodies supported by simple harmonies that do not have the impress of a sufficiently powerful musical personality or a distinct enough idiom to hold the attention of many modern listeners. Erwin Bodky plays well on the harpsichord the music of the north Germans and Rathgeber and on the clavichord the

pieces by Pachelbel and Fischer. The recording is exceptionally faithful.

—C.J.L.

VOICE

BACH: *Cantata 51, Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen; Cantata 209, Non sa che sia dolore*; Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano) with Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Anton Heiller (cond.). Bach Guild BG 546, \$4.98.

▲ THIS version of *Cantata 51* contrasts interestingly with those we have had before. Taken at no such breakneck speed as Schwarzkopf favors, the performance is less patently jubilant than Guillaume's where the tempo is about the same. Stich-Randall's voice is very straight and true—one rarely hears such accurate singing of florid melodic lines. In the strictest sense this is instrumental singing—the words count for little except as they are reflected in the vocal line. The effect is decidedly introvert, but one listens fascinated to the soprano's achievement. There is some virtuoso playing, too, by the obligato trumpeter. The recording is rather close to the singer. Stich-Randall is happier in the Italian companion piece, perhaps because she is more at home in the language. It is an ingratiating work, if not so exciting as the other. The long overture is well played by the orchestra. —P.L.M.

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BERLIOZ: *La Damnation de Faust—Sans regrets j'ai quitté des riantes campagnes; Autrefois un roi de Thule; Grand Dieu! que vois-je?; Ange adoré; D'amour l'ardente flamme; Nature immense; MASSENET: Werther—Je ne sais si je veille; O nature; Qui! ce qu'elle m'ordonne; Lorsque l'enfant revient; Werther! qui m'aurait dit; Des cris joyeux; Ah! mon courage m'abandonne!; Oui! c'est moi!; Pourquoi me réveiller?; N'achevez pas; Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) and Raoul Jobin (tenor) with London Symphony Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari (cond.). London LL 1154, \$3.98.*

▲ KOLASSI and Jobin would seem a somewhat odd pair for this set of "gems" from two famous French works. The tenor, an opera singer first, last and always, has a broader style than the mezzo, and of course a bigger voice. Kolassi's instrument, indeed, is on the small side for Charlotte's music in *Werther*, though she is unfailingly tasteful and musically true. As the Berlioz Marguerite she is more appropriately cast, and sings her *Chanson Gothique* and her moving *Romance* with fine effect, if a little carefully. Jobin is in good voice, though he pushes some of his high tones in the *Werther* music, and in the first part of the *Damnation* he seems strained; he makes up for this later, singing the invocation to nature eloquently and with more than a suggestion of Georges Thill in his voice. All in all, this is a pleasant recording, if not a really exciting one. —P.L.M.

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FRENCH SONGS: *Trois Chansons de Bilitis; Mandoline; Le Jet d'eau; Balade des Femmes de Paris; En sourdine; Fantoches; Clair de lune (Debussy); Chère nuit (Bachelet); Ici-bas; Après un Reve (Fauré); Le Temps des lilas (Chausson); La Vie antérieure; Phidylé (Duparc); Ouvre ton coeur (Bizet); Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) and Gerald Moore (piano). Angel 35217, factory sealed \$4.98, standard \$3.89.*

▲ FOR a measure of Merriman's artistic progress compare this program with a Victor recording of *La chevelure* she made several years ago. Perhaps the presence of Gerald Moore at the piano and Angel's transparent reproduction may be to some extent accountable; still this is the finest singing I have heard from the mezzo-soprano. Her approach to the Debussy songs is very quiet and reserved: there is evidence of serious thought in every one of them. (There are also many happy details in the piano parts, such as the frog sounds in *La Flûte de Pan*.) Sometimes in the other songs one wishes for a more sensuous tone, especially in *Chère nuit*, and the words she sings are apt to be clouded by the peculiar resonance characteristic of her tone. Here and there a word fails to come

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out clearly—one wonders that some kind friend or adviser did not catch this, as on the whole her delivery of the language is careful and correct. All in all this is an effective program, performed in a musically and intelligent manner. —P.L.M.

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IVES: *Abide with me; Walking; Where the eagle; Disclosure; The white gulls; Two little flowers; The greatest man; The children's hour; Berceuse; Ann Street; General William Booth enters into Heaven; Autumn; The swimmers; Evening; Harpalus; Tarrant moss; Serenity; At the river; The see'r; Maple leaves; Tom sails away; He is therel; In Flanders Fields; Helen Boatwright (soprano) and John Kirkpatrick (piano). Over-tone OVER 7, \$5.95.*

▲WE are used to thinking of Ives as a pioneer and a modernist, and such, of course, he is—or was. This pre-eminently satisfying record seems to transport us back to an older day, when the composer's musical conceptions were new and astounding, though still firmly rooted in the conventions and customs of the Victorian era. For Ives was a curious mixture of the old and the new—with all his harmonic daring and all the strange things he introduced into his keyboard parts, he remained at heart a rock-bound New Englander, a country boy fascinated by nature, by Central Park, by revival meetings. Such music needs just the mixture of humility and assurance the present interpreters bring to bear upon it. John Kirkpatrick's affinity with this music has long been known—surely his mastery of the *Concord Sonata* has done more than any other factor to establish Ives as a composer worth listening to. But Helen Boatwright has made her reputation chiefly in other styles of music—in Bach, Handel, Buxtehude and the older masters she has hardly a peer today. Before she has finished the first reverent song—a simple setting of *Abide with me*—it is obvious that she is going to melt us with these miniatures, and melt us she does, time and again. I do not hesitate to hail this as the finest contribution to the literature of recorded American song any artist has made to date.

—P.L.M.

July, 1955

THE LIFE OF CHRIST AS TOLD THROUGH AFRAMERICAN

FOLK SONG: *Prologue: Prepare me one body; Christ's Birth, Boyhood and Ministry: Three Wise Men to Jerusalem came; Lit'l boy; Live-a-humble; He raised poor Lazarus; You hear the lambs a-cryin'; Plenty good room; The Passion of Our Lord; One of you shall betray me; Who betrayed my Lord?; They led my Lord away; He never said a mumberlin' word; Did you hear when Jesus rose?; Where you there?; Roland Hayes (tenor) and Reginald Boardman (piano). Vanguard VRS 462, \$4.98.*

▲IN Roland Hayes' volume of *My Songs*, published in 1948 by Little, Brown and Company, there is a sequence of spirituals to which he gives the collective title *The Life of Christ*. The present recording is based on this cycle. The fact that the singer does not strictly follow the texts or the musical arrangements he has published I take to be one more indication of the essentially improvisatory nature of these songs—they are never done twice exactly alike. A number of the spirituals in the sequence are old Hayes specialties, and no one who has heard them can ever forget—*Lit'l boy, You hear the lambs, Plenty good room*, above all *He never said a mumberlin' word* and *Were you there?* (the last two always sung without accompaniment). And there are others here less familiar, which also make a strong impression. Mr. Hayes is in amazingly fresh and vital voice for all his years, and the recording brings him right into the room with us. The reproduction of Mr. Boardman's well-played piano is exceptional.

—P.L.M.

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MADRIGALS: *Death hath deprived me; As wanton birds; O care, thou wilt despatch me; Hence care, thou art too cruel; Lord, when I think; Cease sorrow now; Thule, the period of cosmography; The Andalusian merchant (Weelkes); I heard a noise; When to the gloomy woods; Camilla fair tripped o'er the plain; Come sorrow, help me to lament; Come, follow me; She with a cruel frown; Cupid in a bed of roses; Cytherea smiling*

said (Bateson); The Randolph Singers, conducted by David Randolph. Westminster WL 5361, \$5.95.

▲MR. RANDOLPH states his purpose in the notes accompanying this set as to remind his hearers that the madrigal very often was a highly serious musical form, far removed from the frivolities of its lighter moments. He might have elaborated further by pointing out that, by virtue of its fa-la refrain, so deeply moving a composition as *O care, thou wilt despatch me* may properly be classed among the ballets, that is, beside the least ponderous of all. But beyond any question this is a weighty program, containing some of the finest works of two of the greatest Elizabethans. The performance has been carefully prepared, and the singers have a real understanding of the magnificent music they are bringing to us. It is more than good to hear such a masterpiece as *Death hath deprived me of my dearest friend* (written in memory of Thomas Morley) done as sensitively as it is here, and to make the acquaintance of such a work as *Come sorrow, help me to lament. O care, thou wilt despatch me* and *Thule, the period of cosmography* are actually two-part works, though their second sections are given separate bands on this record, presumably because the music is published that way. Actually, *Hence care* and *The Andalusian merchant* have no independent existence. As in previous Randolph recordings, the intention here is to make the listener feel as though he were sitting among the singers. —P.L.M.

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PURCELL: *The Faerie Queene—Secrecie's Song; Mystery's Song; Fantasia in D for four viols, 1680; Here let my life* (from cantata, *If ever I more riches did desire*); *Prelude, Air and Hornpipe, for harpsichord*; **LOCKE:** *Consort of four parts, for viols—Fantasia, Courante, Ayre, Sarabande*; **PURCELL:** *Here the dieties approve* (from ode, *Welcome to all the pleasures*); *Dioclesian—Since from my dear Astrea's sight; Suite in E minor for harpsichord—Allemande, Courante, Hornpipe; The Faerie Queene—The plaint*; **JENKINS:** *Payane for four*

viols; Alfred Deller (counter-tenor), Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord), Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble and Consort of Viols. Bach Guild BG 547, \$4.98.

▲DELLER shows to particular advantage in these beautiful numbers: there is a lighter and brighter spirit in both music and performance than characterized his program of Dowland and contemporaries. Deller's is a polished and accomplished art, not a naturally exuberant one; therefore a little help from the music itself is never amiss. His associates are proficient and well-matched. The playing of viols is a rarified and difficult art in our day; one rarely hears a consort sound as well as this. —P.L.M.

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ROSSINI: *Stabat Mater*; Maria Stader (soprano), Marianna Radev (contralto), Ernst Haefliger (tenor), Kim Borg (basso), Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, Berlin, RIAS Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. **MOZART:** *Exsultate, jubilate*; Maria Stader (soprano) and RIAS Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. Decca DX 132, 2 discs, \$9.96.

▲A POINT not made clear in the program notes borrowed for this recording from Toye's life of Rossini (amusingly a not altogether complimentary discussion of *Stabat Mater*) is that the solos in this work were written for a generation of super-singers, and that they show up mercilessly any flaws in the technical equipment of those who undertake them. However well the chorus may sing and the orchestra may play, the final effect of Rossini's music rests with the quartet. For this reason the earlier recording conducted by Sternberg (Oceanic OCS 24) will hold its own against this acoustically superior one. Haefliger is by no means the only tenor today unable to make *Cujus animam* (much despised by Toye) sound like more than a barrel-organ tune, but Dermota managed to do so. One strike against Fricsay's tenor, however, is the rapid tempo set him. Borg introduces a note of novelty into *Pro peccatis* by conceiving it softly, but he does some strange things

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with the words (which he never pronounces too well) and occasionally indulges in heavy *portamento*. Schoeffler, in the older recording, approaches more nearly the grand manner of earlier days. And *Fac ut portem* (to my mind the best page in the score) is none too well sung by Radev, who fails to meet the challenge of Rossini's word grouping or some of his sustained notes. But *Quis est homo* is beautifully done by the two women in this set, and the choral work is superior. Oddly (aside from some cuts in the last two numbers) a couple of measures in *Sancta Mater* have gotten lost, as well as one beat from the *Inflammatu*s. As if in compensation we get an extra beat of the accompanying figure before the soprano enters in *Quis est homo*.

Miss Stader's *Exsultate* falls short of her best, I think, because of the rapid tempi favored in this recording. The passage work in the opening movement is blurred in her haste, and the lovely *Tu virginum corona* aria wants a little more poise. The final *Alleluia*, however, fares better.

—P.L.M.

SCHUBERT: *Die junge Nonne; Die Liebe hat gelogen; Die Winterreise—Die Post; Der Wegweiser*; **BRAHMS:** *Liebestreu; Meine Liebe ist grün; Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden*; **STRAUSS:** *Wiegenlied; Allerseelen; Zueignung; Du meines Herzens Knecht; Ach Lieb, ich muss nun scheiden*; **McARTHUR:** *Night*; **TAYLOR:** *A Song for Lovers*; **TYSON:** *Sea Mood*; Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) and Edwin McArthur (piano). RCA VICTOR LM 1870, \$3.98.

▲THE FRONT of the container, with Mme. Flagstad's portrait, announces only songs by Schubert, Brahms and Strauss; I take it the three American selections are to be considered as encores. Of the German pieces *Sind es Schmerzen*, from the *Magalone* cycle, seems to be new to discs, and *Du meines Herzens Knecht* may be classed at least as unusual. Oddly, too, *Liebestreu*, one of Brahms' most celebrated songs, has been rarely recorded. On the whole the noble voice has withstood July, 1955

remarkably the ravages of time. Only an occasional high tone turns edgy and shrill; the lower part of the singer's range remains very much as it has been. One criticism will cover the whole recital, for the soprano is nothing if not consistent—her singing is all very open and on an even level. To a large extent this is the pianist's fault, for he fulfills the old-fashioned meaning of the work accompanist, never obtrusive, never imaginative, always right there in the background. This is hardly what the piano parts of Schubert, Brahms and Strauss call for.

—P.L.M.

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

ADAM: *Giselle*; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. Capitol LP disc P-8306, \$4.98.

▲WITH a Markova or an Alonso on stage to look at, one might be able to accept this warm-toned but limp performance. But as a musical experience—I think not. The absence of dramatic excitement throughout, the lack of variety between one section and the next suggests that Fistoulari (generally recognized as a sound ballet conductor) either had an off day or was not particularly interested in his assignment. Ballet's Hamlet will reward conductors who take more pains, as witness the Blareau performance (the best modern version) or the Lambert reading of some excerpts (a vintage recording but the finest LP version of all). —C.J.L.

BACH: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor; Chorale Prelude: Ich ruf' zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*; **LISZT:** *Prelude and Fugue in G minor on B.A.C.H.*; London LP disc LL-1174, \$3.98. **BACH:** *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor; Chorale Preludes: Wachet auf; Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter; Von Himmel hoch*; *Prelude and Fugue in E minor*; London LL-1175, \$3.98. All played by Karl Richter (organ).

▲THESE superb recordings of the organ of the Victoria Hall in Geneva, Switzerland, may be enough inducement for a few owners of wide-range phonographs. For those primarily concerned with an effective revelation of Bach's thoughts and feelings in some of his finest work, these discs will very likely disappoint. Herr Richter lacks temperament and leaves this great music on the printed page where he found it. His rhythm wants appropriate tension, his phrasing some soaring curves, his expression some heated conviction. One can turn to Walcha's recording (Decca) for the *Passacaglia* or to Biggs' (Columbia) for the majestic

Liszt elaborations. For the great *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor*, however, one can comb the catalogue, of LPs without finding, in my estimation, a superior version. This situation demands prompt resolution.

—C.J.L.

BIZET: *Roma* (Ballet); **CHABRIER:** *Bourree Fantastique* (Ballet); New York City Ballet Orchestra conducted by Leon Barzin. Vox LP disc PL-9320, \$5.95.

▲THE SECOND disc in Vox's survey of music in the New York City Ballet repertory is no way equal to the first release. If you recall, the former issue contains spirited performances well recorded of Kay's *Western Symphony* and Thomson's *Filling Station*. This one presents some unusually persuasive music available nowhere else; and that is about all. The playing here is distinctly poor as regards unanimity and tonal color. More important, the vitality with which Barzin made these scores delightful in the theatre is almost absent. To conclude, the new recording does not have the definition that one expected after hearing the first release. If, however, you are fond of Bizet (and who isn't), you may not want to be without *Roma*—really the composer's second symphony. It is presented here minus its long andante section. Chabrier's music includes a cut version of *Marche Joyeuse* (which serves as a prelude to the ballet). Mottl's orchestral transcription of the delightful piano piece *Bourree Fantastique*, the magnificent Wagner-cum-Paris interlude to the opera *Gwendoline*, and the exciting *Fete Polonoise* from *Le Roi Malgre Lui*.

—C.J.L.

BRAHMS: *Neue Liebeslieder*, Op. 65; *An die Heimat*, Op. 64, No. 1; *Der Abend*, Op. 64, no. 2; *Fragen*, Op. 64, no. 3; *O schoene Nacht*, Op. 92, no. 1; *Sehnsucht*, Op. 112, no. 1; *Nachstens*, Op. 112, no. 2; *Flore Wend* (soprano), Nancy Waugh (contralto); *Hugues Cuenod* (tenor), Doda Conrad (basso), with Nadia Boulanger and Jean Francaix (piano). Decca DL 9650, \$4.98.

▲DESPITE the statement of the annotator, there are other recordings of this music than those made by Mlle. Boulanger. There is, indeed, a performance of the *Neue Liebeslieder* made by a solo group in Stuttgart, which is very sensibly coupled with the first set of *Liebeslieder Walzer* (Oceanic OCS 28). But since the quartets that share this disc with the second group of waltzes are better performed than in other recorded versions, the choice is not altogether clear-cut. The individual voices in the Stuttgart group seem to me better than these, but they are not quite so well blended, and the Boulanger singers have the advantage of generally smoother reproduction. Comparisons aside, this new performance is spirited and appealing.—P.L.M.

CHOPIN: *Concerto No. 1 in E minor*; **LISZT:** *Concerto No. 1 in E flat*; Samson Francois (piano) with the *Orchestre de la Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire* conducted by Georges Tzipine. Angel LP disc ANG.35168, \$4.98 or \$3.48.

▲FRANCOIS has an authentic musical personality (and heaven knows that is rare these days) but in this view it is emphatically an inappropriate one for Chopin and, one could say, for Liszt, too. Tzipine is a good accompanist; Angel has provided good engineering; but those elements are not enough in the final analysis. Rubinstein continues to be the choice in this repertory.

—C.J.L.

CHOPIN: *Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor*, Op. 35; *Sonata No. 3 in B minor*, Op. 58; Alexander Brailowsky (piano). RCA Victor LP disc LM-1866, \$3.98.

▲POSTWAR record collectors coming across this disc are going to wonder how Brailowsky ever built a reputation playing Chopin. The pianist's phrasing on this occasion is fussy and mannered; the tempi are teased no end; and the result is something that just lacks poetry and spirit. Brailowsky, as far as I know, has not played Chopin the way he played it in the 1930s in a long while. All that seems left of that style of playing is in the sounds he is still able to draw from a piano. They are pretty, and this recording mirrors them attractively.

—C.J.L.

CHOPIN: *Ballades*; Freidrich Gulda (piano). London 10" LP disc LD-9177, \$2.98.

▲THESE magnificent works are still best served by Robert Casadesu (Columbia ML-4798), in spite of the differences in recording quality one would expect between the old issue and the present one. For the facts are that Gulda does not play with the sensitivity, the flow, or the abandon one had a right to anticipate after his fine performances of the Chopin *Preludes*. Take, for example, the callous and hurried way he handles the sublime opening of the *F minor Ballade* or his choppy manner of phrasing the second subject of the *A flat*; and it is plain that Gulda has had an off day. More's the pity, for the recording is superbly lifelike in sound.

—C.J.L.

CHOPIN: *Mazurkas in B flat minor*, Op. 24, No. 4; *in F minor*, Op. 63, No. 2; *in D*, Op. 33, No. 2; *in A minor*, Op. 17, No. 4; *in E minor*, Op. 41, No. 2; *Nocturnes in B flat minor*, Op. 9, No. 1; *in D flat*, Op. 27, No. 2; *in C minor*, Op. 48, No. 1; *Barcarolle in F sharp minor*, Op. 60; *Fantasia in F minor*, Op. 49; Alexander Uninsky (piano). Epic LP disc LC-3122, \$3.98.

▲ONE is hard put to think of a better choice of Chopin on a single LP disc. For that reason and the fact the recording is good, it is a pity that Uninsky plays with such little interest, style, and poetry. So for the *Fantasia*, the preference here is for Yves Nat, or Novaes, for the *Barcarolle* Lipatti, and for the rest Rubinstein.

—C.J.L.

HANDEL: *Apollo e Dafne* (Cantata for 2 Voices; Margaret Ritchie (soprano). Bruce Boyce (barytone) and Oiseau-Lyre Instrumental Ensemble conducted by Anthony Lewis. Oiseau-Lyre 50038, \$4.98.

▲THIS early Italian cantata by Handel was reviewed, along with the Handel Society release of same, in October of 1952. A delightful work, it is best served in the present performance in which the singing and orchestral direction are more appreciable. Moreover, this release is clearer in sound than the 1952 issue, with the result that Miss Ritchie's ethereal voice is more realistically reproduced. Definitely London's engineers have improved the quality of the original recording, but alas no effort has been made to supply an English translation of the Italian text. —J.N.

LISZT: *Consolation No. 1; La Lugubre Gondola No. 2; Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude*; **SCHUMANN:** *Humoreske, Op. 20*; London International LP disc TW-91041, \$4.98. **FAURE:** *Nocturne No. 12, Op. 107; Barcarolle No. 4, Op. 44; Valse-Caprice No. 3, Op. 59; Impromptu No. 3, Op. 34*; **RAVEL:** *Prelude; Minuet sur le nom de Haydn; Valses nobles et sentimentales; Toccata from Le Tombeau de Couperin*; London International LP disc TW-91035, \$4.98. Jean-Michel Damase (piano).

▲M. DAMASE lacks temperament, but he owns a pearly tone, a sense of delicacy and refinement, and a respect for composer's directions. He also has a fair-to-middling technique at his disposal. This diverse equipment allows him to do justice to music that does not demand the expression of strong feelings or the illusion of spontaneity. Consequently, Ravel fares best of the composers represented in these two new, modestly recorded discs; Faure, next best. The pianist, in my estimation, is clearly out of his depth in his encounter with Liszt and, above all, Schumann. —C.J.L.

MUSIC OF JOHANN AND JOSEF STRAUSS: Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. London LL-1028/29, \$7.96.

▲THIS album reassembles music of the brothers Johann and Joseph Strauss which the late Clemens Krauss recorded for London in the last years of his life. Krauss' death in Mexico City came unexpectedly in June 1954. Like the true Viennese he was, he loved the music of the Strauss family and played it from the heart. This set makes a cherishable souvenir of the conductor. The contents are six waltzes by Johann Strauss—*The Blue Danube, Tales of the Vienna Woods, Artist's Life, Voices of Spring, Morning Papers, and Bei uns zuhause*, and the overtures to *The Gypsy Baron* and *The Bat*, and three waltzes by Joseph Strauss—*Music of the Spheres, Village Swallows* and *Mein Lebenslauf is Leib und Lust*. Soundwise quite impressive. —J.N.

MOELLER: *Wenn ueber Sonnenwegen*; **BRAHMS:** *In stiller Nacht*; **FOLKSONG:** *Jetzt ging i ans Bruennele*; **FOLKSONG:** *Heimliche Liebe*; **SCANDELLI:** *Ein Hennlein weiss*; **WELSH FOLKSONG:** *To shepherds on a distant hill*; **MOELLER:** *Erst kommt das linke Bein*; **MOZART (att.):** *Schlafe, mein Prinzchen*; Obernkirchen Children's Choir, conducted by Edith Moeller. Angel 64012, 10", \$2.98.

▲THE NOW familiar charm of this youthful chorus does not wear thin in this latest program, containing a delightful duet in *Erst kommt das linke Bein*, Scandelli's wonderful piece about the little white hen, Brahms' moving arrangement of the folksong *In stiller Nacht* and a rather drawn-out performance of the *Wiegenlied* by Bernard Flies, here as usual attributed to Mozart. All in all, pleasant listening for anyone who doesn't hate children, and a natural for those who have enjoyed *Der froehliche Wanderer*. —P.L.M.

OPERATIC RECITAL: *Salvator Rosa—Di spose, di padre le gioie serene* (Gomes); *Simon Boccanegra—Il lacerato spirito* (Verdi); *Les Huguenots—Seigneur, rampart et seul soutien*; *Piff, paff!*; *Robert le Diable—Nonnes, qui reposez* (Meyerbeer); *La Juive—Si le regnez* (Halevy); Cesare Siepi (basso) with the Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Alberto Erede. London LD 9169, 10", \$2.98.

▲TONALLY Siepi is in fine form in his Italian arias, though it would be too much to claim that his performance is really distinguished, or that his intonation is perfect. He is less at home in the French language, and his lack of success in Meyerbeer provides an answer for those who wonder why this composer is so generally neglected today. Even the best of our opera singers lack the essential style. —P.L.M.

SCHUBERT: *Fantasy in C, Op. 15 ("Wanderer"); Moments Musicaux, Op. 94*; Istvan Nadas (piano). Period LP disc SPL-719, \$4.98.

▲AS in his disc debut, Nadas shows a fine command of a piano's resources, but little musical personality. His failing is particularly glaring in the Schubert literature; for to keep such things as the *Wanderer Fantasy* from seeming interminable one needs the impress of a powerful spirit. Though Curzon has not received the marvelous recording Nadas has been given for his efforts, the British pianist is the man for the *Wanderer*. Try Edwin Fischer for the *Moments Musicaux*. —C.J.L.

VIENNESE SONGS: *Es steht ein alter Nussbaum* (Hochmuth-Werner-Zillner); *Wenn der Herrgott net will* (Arnold); *'S Nussdorfer Sierndl* (Schneider-Fellner); *Wiener Fiakertied* (Pick); *Du guater Himmelwater* (Krakauer); *In Grinsing gibl's a Himmelstrass'n* (Hochmuth-Werner-Foerdl); *Sechl's Leut'in, so war's Anno dreissig* (Allmeder-Domanig-Roll); *Mei Mutter war a Weinerin* (Gruber); Erich Kunz, (baritone), with Kemmeter-Faltl' Schrammel Orchester, Angel 64021, 10", \$2.98.

▲KUNZ sings these popular favorites in a very intimate style, making the most of every syllable, and treating us to some broad Viennese dialect. Those whose memories are stirred by the songs will enjoy every note and tone; others may feel that the expression is overdone. —P.L.M.

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